


JOSEPH
GUNDRY ALEXANDER

HORACE G. ALEXANDER

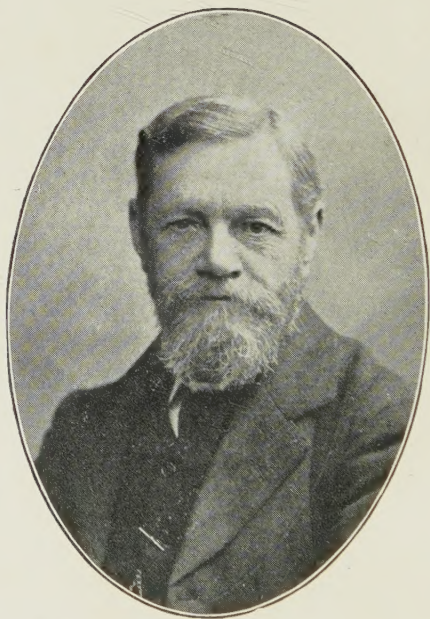
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BY
HORACE G. ALEXANDER

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TO MY MOTHER
WHO FOR OVER THIRTY-FIVE YEARS
SHARED IN THE WORK
HERE RECORDED

PREFACE

IN compiling the following pages I have been greatly helped by some of my father's fellow-workers in his various activities. In reply to requests I received a number of valuable reminiscences, records of activities, estimates of his work and character. These papers were sent on the generous understanding that they would not necessarily be quoted verbatim. As a matter of fact some are quoted in part or in full ; with others it has been more convenient to incorporate their purport in my own writing. To all who have contributed in this way I am much indebted. I owe still more to my father's brothers, to my mother and my wife, and I also wish to thank several other relatives and friends for advice, information and criticism.

July, 1920.

H.G.A.

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INTRODUCTION

My father was not a famous man—except, perhaps, in China ; and this small volume is not an attempt to add another chapter to the history of the nineteenth century. Nor, on the other hand, is it written solely for the benefit of those who knew and loved and respected him. Their personal memories, it may be hoped, are of greater value than any written memorial. The true memorial of such men as he is the work they have accomplished—or attempted—and the influence of their example on those who loved them. And yet there is something more that may be added.

My father would have disclaimed any great intellectual capacity, any exceptional eloquence or literary gift, force of character or compelling personality. It is true that he would sometimes display powers well above the average. But his was one of those simple, unassuming natures that makes no attempt to force attention by the display of exceptional qualities. Lovable he was, very gentle and patient, conscientious and persevering in all that he did. But these qualities, happily, are found in many men and women the world over. And yet he accomplished more in his life than many men who make a far greater display. One inestimable privilege he had—a wife who entered into

all his concerns, who made it easy for him to carry them out, who encouraged, criticised, gave counsel and most loyal support. And there were within himself great resources of devotion and faith. He always worked on at each self-appointed task until it was finished. With many of us the cares of this world tend to blur the vision, and the purpose becomes dulled by the callous indifference or hostility even of those whose sympathy we expect. My father's visions remained clear to the end, and his purposes were still the same. He was sometimes discouraged, but he never lost faith. The work to which he set his hand in impulsive youth was still his active work till the end. He would often embark on fresh enterprises, but he never gave up the old. Each new activity that caught his attention was thoroughly mastered in all its details, so that he was always among the leaders of the many movements in which he shared. Nothing was too small to be worth understanding fully and doing thoroughly, nothing too great to be grappled with. And it was all practical work. He wanted men and women everywhere to be able to live purer, happier, freer lives. Therefore he strove to abolish all kinds of slavery ; to suppress the opium trade between India and China ; to substitute arbitration and federation for unjust and brutal war. The uncivilised races of the world were being exploited by the white races, and must be freed from such forms of slavery, in order that they might develop their own best life ; the people of the East were being forced into degradation by the Powers of the West ; they too

must be given the chance of living undegraded lives ; the liberties of all the world were stunted and imperilled by the burden of armaments and the fear of war ; these must be removed. To many to-day, including those whose eyes have been opened by the havoc of war, such objects as these seem good, and worth striving after ; though some may think them not so constructive as might be wished, reminiscent of the days when the doctrine of *laissez-faire* reigned supreme. But this was not all.

Side by side with these and similar activities were equally devoted efforts to promote in many countries the preaching of what is known broadly as evangelical Christianity—especially in China, Madagascar, Basutoland, and, strange as it may seem to those who talk glibly of Christian Europe, in France and England.

What was the relation of this interest in “ gospel work ” to the interest in so-called philanthropic activities ? A superficial judgment, from the modern point of view, might conclude that there was none, that the evangelical interest was a survival of Victorian preachings in a mind that was sufficiently open to modern ideas to give at least a large share of its energy to more definite humanitarian work. We of the twentieth century are so apt to associate prayer meetings and Gospel preachings with a severe countenance and a peculiar jargon that we forget what a close connection the words “ Gospel,” “ salvation,” “ sin,” “ redemption,” have had to such vital questions as the treatment of native races or the ending of war.

To my father, as without doubt to many more of his generation and of the same faith, the Gospel of Jesus Christ meant what it said : " good news " — " good tidings to the poor, release to the captives, recovery of sight to the blind, liberty for them that are bruised." Such was Christ's account of His own mission, and such, in my father's judgment, should be the work of all Christians. To him peace and liberty were an essential part of the gospel ; salvation, as he understood it, included salvation from the evils of war, of slavery, and other forms of oppression, of drunkenness and misery ; sin, the practice of them ; redemption, the joy of living a good life, not a life of religious ceremony only, but of service to one's fellow-men. His religious life and humanitarian activities formed one harmonious whole. His interest in mission work, and his interest in peace, together led him to undertake a journey to China, in order to combat the propensity of many Christian missionaries to confuse the gospel of Christ with the warlike habits of modern Christendom ; and his interest in missions again prompted him more than once to visit Paris, in order to obtain better government, including religious freedom, for the Malagasy. His conviction was that the royal road to human good was by learning, understanding and accepting the truth contained in the words of Christ ; the revelation of God there shown was to him the one sure foundation : this was the positive basis of good with which he strove to replace the evils of war and slavery. The life and words of Christ were to him real, life-giving and invincible.

And it was because Christ's faith in God and man had not failed even when shame and death seemed to overwhelm His life-work, that my father, acutely conscious as he was that much of his life-work was to all appearance ruined in the war, still worked on to the end undaunted, with a growing and amazing faith—not blind, but seeming to see further than mortal eye—as month by month he wore himself out in the service of men. He “never feared, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph.”

Most men have not this faith to-day. We build projects of reconstruction and leagues of nations ; we speak of social revolution and national autonomy ; but when the way to the goal proves very long and arduous a strong temptation arises to seek short cuts by violence, fraud and cajolery, or to relapse into weak compromise and non-committal statesmanship. Orthodox religion is discarded because it has lost touch with life ; but we are still at a loss for a new way of salvation. We are in need of some deep faith that will remain unshaken by life's calamities. It may not be quite the same faith that my father had ; it will not express itself in the same words, but if it is expressed in unconquerable effort towards human welfare the spirit is always the same.

The main purpose of this book, then, is to show how one man, without exceptional talent, by faith was able to shake, or even to remove, mountains.

His life, like any other, was composed of many strands, woven together too intricately to be unravelled by the most delicate hand, but all along

can be discerned an unbroken faith, a profound belief that every man has in him some element of the divine, and that, if it could be brought under Christ-like influence, it would transform him into a man of noble aim, worthy to live in true liberty with his fellows.

* * * *

The book has become longer than was at first intended. On the one hand, my father identified himself so closely with the various movements in which he participated that it has been impossible to describe his work without giving some idea of the scope of each movement during his association with it. Again, the value of his work depended so much on the care given to details that it has seemed impossible to omit all detail ; the reader who may find the succession of towns visited or meetings held or congresses attended from time to time rather tedious, is asked to believe that a great deal of detail with an almost equal claim to record has been omitted. A better literary artist might have been able to convey the sense of detailed application in fewer words. I have done my best, and trust no one will be overwhelmed by the result.

My greatest difficulty has been in the attempt to give a true account of some of his religious activities. His theology, or at least his way of expressing it, is not mine ; and the sense of relative values has changed. I have tried to give a true account of his work in such a way that it may appeal to those who no longer use evangelical phraseology, as well as to those who do. I sincerely hope none of his

older colleagues in religious work will feel that a wrong impression is created, or a sense of proportion established that he would not have approved.

As I have read through the letters written on his journeys, and the periodical reports of some of the organisations with which he worked, I have been almost humiliated to discover how far his wisdom and insight extended beyond anything I had known. I can only hope that those who read his life may share some part at least of the inspiration that the writing of it has been to one of his sons.

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

1848-1873

JOSEPH GUNDRY ALEXANDER was the youngest son of Samuel Alexander, who for some years had been living at Bath when Joseph was born there on April 20th, 1848. His mother, Sarah Alexander, was a daughter of Joseph Fry Gundry of Calne in Wiltshire. Through both his parents he was descended from families who for some generations had been members of the Society of Friends, and some of whom had suffered for adherence to principles which they held as vital to the cause of truth.

J. G. Alexander refers to this in a pamphlet published in 1901 entitled "War and Retribution," in which he says, "The monstrous anomaly grows on me the more I study the sayings of the Lord Jesus and of His early disciples, that Christians, including many whose saintliness and learning alike command my admiration, fail to see the contradiction between the Gospel of Christ and the practice of war. I do not find this a reason for ceasing to uphold what I believe to be the truth on this question, a truth which has come down to me through Quaker ancestors, some of whom suffered to death in the

jails of the seventeenth century, whilst others at a later date surrendered prospects of high emolument, and even their means of livelihood, rather than compromise their convictions of the unlawfulness of war."

The reference here is partly to his great-grandfather, William Alexander, who, having become convinced of the truth of Quakerism, especially of the unlawfulness of all participation in war, gave up his post as foreman in the naval dockyard at Chatham, in the eighteenth century. Apart from a family tradition that he was found to have a birthright claim to membership in the Society of Friends, nothing appears to be known of his antecedents. But he was clearly a man of unusual force of character. He left the dockyard against strong pressure and several of the workmen followed his example. More than a generation later his name was still remembered there with respect. He started a private school in Rochester, the advertisement of which is still extant. This school flourished till about 1820, and several Quaker notables received their education in it. Amongst these was William Allen, chemist and philanthropist, a man who influenced Governments and Emperors.

William Alexander's son, William, J. G. Alexander's grandfather, was sent to a bank in London. He also gave up his prospects because he could not participate in raising loans for carrying on the Napoleonic wars. Soon after, in 1810, he founded the well-known Lombard Street business of Alexanders. He died in middle life, as the result of

an accident, leaving a widow and eight children. His widow, Ann Alexander (*née* Barber), came of a long lived strain, and lived to the age of eighty-six. Her children all lived to a good age. Of the five sons, Samuel, father of J. G. Alexander, died youngest at the age of seventy-four. The other four brothers lived to be over eighty, one of them to the age of ninety. The three sisters outlived them all. Mary Barber and Elizabeth died within a week of each other in 1907, aged respectively one hundred and three and nearly ninety-four, and Sarah Ann, the youngest of the family, died the day before her one hundred and first birthday, in January, 1917, a month before her nephew J. G. Alexander himself.

Samuel Alexander was a strict Friend and abolitionist. Joseph, as a little boy in Bath, used to see the bailiffs enter the house to seize his father's silver spoons in payment of church rates ; whilst escaped slaves were sometimes received as visitors into the house, sometimes to speak at anti-slavery meetings at which his father would preside. Samuel Alexander also superintended a free-labour depôt in Bath for the sale of goods such as sugar and cotton which had not been produced by slave labour.

Joseph's mother was a devout and spiritually-minded woman. She expressed her desire for her children in these words : " I feel my responsibility for the sacred duty of training them very deeply and I desire to bring my need for help in this respect, daily and hourly to Him who is able to bestow all gifts and talents, and who knows it is the strongest wish of my heart to bring my dear children up for

Him in the knowledge and love of God their Saviour." There were six children, four brothers and two sisters, one of whom was younger than Joseph and the play-mate of his early years. As a small boy Joseph was of a remarkably studious and thoughtful disposition, so that his companions nicknamed him "the Philosopher." One of the earliest recollections of him is that after breakfast he would take Josephus's "History of the Jews" (a large volume which he was scarcely able to carry), place it on the sofa and, kneeling beside it, pore over its contents by the hour whilst his little sister Sally would implore in vain, "Joey, *do* come and play!"

In 1855, when Joseph was seven years old, his father moved from Bath to Leominster in Herefordshire, where he took an ironmongery business, and four years later Joseph was sent to a small private Friends' school at Brighton, kept by Frederick Taylor and his wife. Whilst at school he was befriended by Mrs. Morrison, widow of the pioneer Chinese missionary, who seems to have sown the first seeds of his interest in the welfare of the Chinese people; he also first met a Friend, Christine Alsop, (*née* Majolier, of Congénies in the Gard, South of France) who was afterwards instrumental in leading him to devote much of his life to France.

During these early years Joseph became deeply conscious of the reality of death. His brother George was drowned in the river at Leominster while bathing, both his sisters died, and, worst blow of all, he lost his mother when he was only twelve years old. But her training and love

were a very precious memory to him throughout his life, and she had certainly done much to form in him a character that endured to the end. He used to say that the thought of his little sister in heaven had also been a great inspiration to him.

When Joseph left Brighton he was sent to another private Friends' school under Till Adam Smith, at Weston-super-Mare ; but in 1863, when he was fifteen, he left school and returned to Leominster to serve behind the counter in his father's business.

Before the family settled at Leominster the Friends' meeting there had been held for many years in silence except for the occasional visits of ministers from other meetings. Now a new spiritual life began. At the funeral of Joseph's brother George his mother first broke the silence. From that time onward, from time to time, she spoke with power in the Leominster meeting. Some of the younger members of the meeting began to feel that they, too, had messages to give to their fellow-worshippers. An elder showed his disapproval of this outbreak of vocal utterance, and tried to check it. But Sarah Alexander would not be silenced. After a time the repressive elder relented. He began to encourage the young speakers. Finally, he too found that he had sometimes a word to say in the Meeting. Soon other activities, including an Adult School, developed, as channels through which the ardent young Friends could carry this new sense of life to their fellow-townsmen. A few years later the meeting-house had to be enlarged.

Before her death Sarah Alexander was recorded as a "Minister" of the Society, and she undertook some religious visits to other meetings and to the families of Friends.

After he left school the time soon came when Joseph felt that he must consecrate his life more fully than hitherto to such work and service in the world as he felt guided by his heavenly Father to undertake. His spare time was spent in study, and in helping any good work in which others invited him to share; these included the Adult School and Band of Hope. On his own initiative he also invited the workmen in his father's business to meet him a few minutes before beginning work at 6 a.m., to listen to a short reading from the Bible followed by prayer. This effort does not seem to have met with much encouragement, but the example led a companion to institute and carry on till his death a similar gathering in what became a large business in South Wales.

It is clear from a diary he kept that he was dissatisfied with the quietism that pervaded Quakerism at the time; he felt "ashamed of our favoured society whose members in early days traversed almost every then accessible part of the world to preach the Gospel."

Apart from religious activities, though "not until I had a clear feeling that it was my religious duty to do so," he began to take a part in political life, speaking in the Leominster Corn Exchange at a Liberal meeting at the 1868 election, "principally on the subject of national education." He spoke for

about ten minutes, "and was received in a most hearty manner." During the same election he also addressed meetings at the Working Men's Club and a Temperance Meeting.

A couple of years later, encouraged and assisted by his eldest brother Edward, Joseph G. Alexander resolved to undertake legal studies with a view to the Bar. He therefore began by working for London Matriculation, under the tutorship of Arthur H. Gilkes, afterwards Headmaster of Dulwich. In 1870 he left Leominster and became an articled pupil of J. Bevan Braithwaite, a leading Friend and distinguished law-conveyancer. He gave special attention to the study of International Law.

Whilst engaged in his legal studies he found a congenial home with his three maiden aunts at Reigate; in 1871 he began to speak in the Friends' Meetings for Worship there, and he joined in many philanthropic activities with the younger members of Reigate meeting. He was specially active in Temperance and Sunday School work. He took a great interest in a country meeting of Friends at Thakeham in Sussex, once the meeting regularly attended by William Penn, and for some time he visited it fortnightly for the week-end.

At the Yearly Meeting in London in 1871 he heard Christine Alsop speak of the needs of France. Her call for workers to help in gospel labours came home to him. During and after the Franco-German war the Friends' War Victims' Relief Fund had helped to bring Friends into close contact with many people in Paris and other parts of France, and now the way

seemed to be open for a spiritual message to the people. In November, 1871, as J. G. Alexander sat in a meeting at Reigate, he "experienced something of the fulfilment of the words, 'He shall show you things to come.' A sight was given me of service to be performed for my blessed Lord and Master, it being my conviction that it will some day be my place to go to China, and that ere the close of next year I shall have to go to France in connection with the work now being carried on by R. and C. Alsop."

Residence in Paris was certain to be of great use to him in his legal studies, particularly in view of his specialisation in International Law. In July, 1872, he went to Paris, and undertook legal studies at the Sorbonne. His first experiences of Paris were immediately after the days of the Commune, and there can be little doubt that the impressions of those days, and the close sympathy with which he followed the early struggles of the Third Republic, gave him that clear understanding of and devotion to French life that formed one of the guiding passions of all his later years.

Before he left England he had always conformed to the peculiar Quaker customs of wearing a "plain" *i.e.*, collarless, coat, and of using "thee and thou" in address. He now decided that it would be wrong "to come into this Roman Catholic country in a peculiar dress"; and finding that Christine Alsop and other Friends who had worked in France did not "tu-toyer," he dropped this too. As noted already, he was impatient with Quaker quietism; and,

looking round for active religious workers, seeking to influence the world, with whom he could associate, he naturally found himself drawn more and more towards the vigorous evangelistic work of the time. Rather later than this, in order to express his unity with active fellow-Christians, he felt it right to be baptised and for a time he took the sacrament occasionally. In Paris, especially, he was forced to seek fellow-workers beyond his fellow-Quakers. It may be said that the spiritual and mystical nature of the Quakerism in which he was brought up saved him from much of the harsh and narrow dogma often associated with strict evangelicalism; whilst his active co-operation with Christian workers of other sects set him free from some of the narrowing influences of Quakerism. In later life he found among his fellow-workers in good causes men with little or no profession of religion at all.

Apart from the technical knowledge of French required by his studies, in his first few months in Paris J. G. Alexander acquired a very full knowledge of the language through the other activities to which he devoted himself; in fact, as is perhaps not unusual in the case of foreigners who have a gift for language, in later years he seemed to speak French with greater eloquence, power and purity of diction than his own mother-tongue. The only relaxation from his studies which he gave himself was the work that had so largely contributed to take him to Paris—spreading evangelical Christianity among the ignorant people of the city. Some of these activities were in connection with the Paris branch of the

Y.M.C.A. More important, however, was his connection with the McAll Mission, with which he worked from time to time when in France until 1900. This mission was founded by a Scot, Dr. R. W. McAll, who, when distributing tracts in a workmen's quarter in Paris, was asked if he would come and tell of God to the people. J. G. Alexander attended night after night as leader at one of the Paris mission centres. So deeply did this work take hold of him that he found it necessary to postpone his studies in order to undertake a two months' tour through France. Of this work he wrote : " I dare not doubt that I am called to this service by the Holy Spirit which I have striven to obey and learnt to love for more than ten years, which has now caused me to postpone prospects of temporal advantage. Could I expect that the Saviour who laid down His life for me, would be satisfied with a service which only occupied a few of my spare hours ? I feel constrained to this work, not as a self-chosen path of sacrifice, but as clearly pointed out to me by my unfailing and unerring guide. May God's strength be perfected in my weakness." At the end of 1872 he attended a conference on Evangelical Protestantism in Europe at Geneva. On his return to England he writes in his diary, " I seem now to perceive the beginning of the fulfilment of my dear mother's death-bed blessing, ' Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, *whose branches run over the wall.*' "

He was in England again before Christmas, and studying in London until July, 1873 ; in August he returned to Paris. An American Friend, Allan Jay,

visiting England in that year, called a conference of about a dozen young English Quakers, of whom J. G. Alexander was one, and suggested the starting of a special meeting for young men. These meetings were held monthly at different places in or near London, and grew into the Friends' Christian Fellowship Union. This Union has continued to flourish and expand as the main organ of the "extension work" undertaken by young Friends of the London district. J. G. Alexander took an active part for some years whenever he was in England.

On his return to Paris, during the first two months he helped Dr. McAll's work among the ouvriers, and then visited the Loire and the West coast, addressing meetings. Having been called to England by the serious illness of his father, he spent some time, after keeping the Hilary term at Lincoln's Inn, touring through Shropshire, holding meetings among Friends and others. His message was never a mere call to conversion, as if the first acceptance of Christian faith were alone needed for right living. As early as 1870, at a conference he attended in Dublin, some speakers were urging that only those who could profess true conversion of soul should be allowed to take part in Sunday School teaching. J. G. Alexander, though very young and quite unknown to the leaders of the conference, broke in to declare, "There is Christianity of the blade and of the ear, as well as of the full corn in the ear." About this time, too, he wrote a pamphlet addressed particularly to younger members of the Society of Friends, under the title "Let no man despise thy youth."

It was an earnest plea to younger men and women to adopt Paul's advice to Timothy, to begin active Christian work with the full enthusiasm of youth. He himself practised what he preached to others. He was generally ready to attend to the advice and admonition of his elders ; but no such admonition could prevent him from undertaking the work to which he felt impelled.

CHAPTER II

STUDENT DAYS AND MARRIAGE

1873-1881

IT would seem that even during his time in Paris J. G. Alexander had doubts of ever giving himself at all completely to legal practice. He had, it is true, written a short time before that he felt he had been "born to the law," and his letters show a keen interest in law reform; during his early years, too, he scraped together a good many honest pence by writing law reports for the *Law Times* and other papers; and his mind favoured that precision and care in the accumulation of facts which is sometimes described as a "legal bent." Some years later he wrote a "tract" on "Lawyers and Christianity." This is not, as might be supposed, a discussion of the ethics of advocacy. In the first few pages he discusses the "evidence" for the truth of Christianity, and observes that it is impossible to attain absolute certainty as to religious truth. But the lawyer knows the importance of having "a good working hypothesis, and of accepting this as the truth when absolute truth is wanting," and he suggests that the "agnostic," the man without definite religious convictions, is a man who tries to face life without a working hypothesis. Such a man, he contends, can only expect to make shipwreck of his life. And as Pascal had observed,

“ If Christianity were susceptible of absolute demonstration, its acceptance could have no moral value.” Then he proceeds to enumerate great lawyers, from Grotius onwards, who have been more than nominal Christians, and whose piety has been a real inspiration to them in making their contributions to legal theory and practice. He quotes from a memoir of Sir William Jones, a judge of the early days of the Indian Empire, a motto, correcting Sir Edward Coke, which might well have been his own :—

“ Sir Edward Coke.

Six hours in sleep, in law’s grave study six,
Four spend in prayer, the rest on nature fix,
Rather

Seven hours to law, to soothing slumber seven,
Ten to the world allot, and all to heaven.”

He also answers the objection that emphasis on personal salvation “ may seem to savour of egoism ; but it is true in religion, as in many other spheres of thought and action, that a man must obtain a post of vantage for himself before he can be serviceable to others.”

In this and other ways he showed deep interest in law, and in transforming it into a means of greater human good, but the law alone did not seem to provide full scope for him ; the actual process even of conveyancing law he seems to have found, to say the least, unattractive, and now, by 1874, he had felt so keenly the call to give himself as far as possible to more directly humanitarian and evangelistic work that he writes of “ giving a few more months to this [evangelistic] work before settling down— if I ever do settle down—to professional life.”

On his first arrival in Paris J. G. Alexander was at once befriended by Justine Dalencourt, who, for fifty years, has been the active centre of Quakerism in Paris. Friends' meetings were held near her home at Boulogne-sur-Seine, and he frequently assisted at her women's Bible-class. She introduced him to other Christian workers, and to members of her own family. He lodged with her sister, Mme. de Pradel, and was soon adopted into the family as a son, and was always welcomed to the house on his arrival in Paris, from this first residence till the time of Mme. de Pradel's death. Mme. de Pradel, who was a Catholic, used to invite her friends to informal musical soirées. J. G. Alexander was never very musical, but he evidently enjoyed these occasions. He suggested to Mme. Dalencourt that they might sometimes sing hymns. Hymns were accordingly introduced, and occasionally a passage of Scripture read. For the time being that was all. Whatever Mme. de Pradel thought of it she acquiesced. Many years later Mme. Dalencourt was watching through the night as her sister lay on her deathbed. As death drew near Mme. de Pradel remembered the hymns sung in her salon many years before. In them she found consolation for her last hours on earth and death came to her in great peace as the sisters repeated the words together. Mme. Dalencourt remembered with gratitude the faithfulness of the young man who had suggested the singing of hymns. It may be safely assumed that J. G. Alexander, however strong his conviction that some good would come from the singing of those

hymns, had little idea of the peace they would ultimately bring to the mind of his beloved "French Mother."

He also formed in Paris what was perhaps the most intimate and devoted friendship of his life, with an Alsatian, Hermann Krüger. In those days, as may well be supposed, Hermann Krüger felt an intense desire to see the native land from which he was an exile reconquered and restored to France by force of arms. J. G. Alexander could not agree with him as to the method of re-vindicating justice in Alsace, but in evangelistic work they thought and acted with one mind and will; and the day finally came when, to his friend's great joy, Hermann Krüger, like so many of his compatriots, was convinced that there might be a better and surer way, requiring, indeed, more patience and self-control, of righting the wrong that had been done. This friendship continued after both friends were married, and developed into a close affection of the two families—an affection which endured after Hermann Krüger's death.

In 1874 the two friends made a tour of French Y.M.C.A.'s and visited Belgium together. Then J. G. Alexander returned to England and took first-class honours in his first LL.B. examination in January, 1875. In the spring of the latter year he undertook another missionary journey through the west of France, visiting a good many scattered and isolated churches, and in the summer he re-visited his friends in Paris and went from there to Strasburg. There he spent six happy weeks studying German,

in order to be able to take a more intelligent interest in the proceedings at the Hague of the third congress of the Association for the Reform and Codification of the Law of Nations, afterwards the International Law Association.

Whilst in Holland he took the opportunity to visit the Dutch Y.M.C.A.'s, and also attended some meetings in Antwerp. His was not one of those natures that are content to "know a country" through its capital city or its notorious beauty spots alone; by the end of 1877 he had laid the foundation of a deep and wide knowledge of many sides of the great French nation as well as something of Alsatians, Dutch, Belgians and Germans. All this was of inestimable value towards forming a wise and understanding judgment of the international situations that he tried to meet in later life.

From Strasburg he had written to his brother, "Though I don't feel afraid of ultimately succeeding at the Bar yet I should greatly prefer getting such a position as Lecturer on Roman or International Law." It was evident that International Law had taken hold of him more than any other branch of his studies; and this, no doubt, because he saw in its development a powerful aid to the elimination of the so-called arbitrament of international war.

His expert knowledge of International Law was turned to very useful account in more than one direction. His uncle, George William Alexander, had been for many years the Treasurer and an active member of the Anti-Slavery Society; in 1876 this Society found itself in rather low water, but with

much work still to be done on behalf of the subject races in Africa and other parts of the world ; accordingly it appealed for young recruits to join its committee, and J. G. Alexander responded to the appeal. He remained one of the most valued members of the committee until his death. In the same year (1876) J. G. Alexander again attended the Congress of the International Law Association, this time at Bremen ; and he was appointed a member of a committee to make recommendations on Patent Law. Some useful work was done by this committee in framing a statement of the points of difference in existing national laws, and drawing up a scheme of principles for an international law. J. G. Alexander reported on behalf of the committee at the Frankfort Congress of 1878. In this way, as in many others, the Association helped to lay foundations on which the governments of the world could and did build a system of international law. In 1883 the first convention was signed at Paris for the creation of an International Union for the Protection of Industrial Property—*i.e.*, Patents and Trade-marks ; and this union, with its permanent office at Berne, has continued to do much useful work in codifying the international law of the subject.

In 1877, at Antwerp, J. G. Alexander took part in the discussion of Treaties as part of the Law of Nations. In 1878 he attended two conferences in Paris, that of the Institute of International Law, and the Patents Congress, where he presented the report prepared by the committee of the International Law Association. Then he attended the

Association's Congress at Frankfort and afterwards went on behalf of the Anti-Slavery Society to the Berlin Congress of the Powers, as one of a deputation to urge that the slave trade should be recognised as piracy by international law. He personally approached Lord Salisbury to press him to take steps to this end, but it was found impossible to pass any general declaration. The politicians had learnt nothing in fifty years. "Peace with honour," at Berlin in 1878, as at Vienna in 1814, left countless seeds of future wars to grow up and poison the life of the European nations; and the renewed opportunity for international abolition of the slave-trade scarcely received serious consideration.

J. G. Alexander also formed one of a deputation to the German Crown Prince and Princess, "and was enabled to represent to the former the grievous injury done to his country by the prevalence of militarism and to express to him the hope that, if spared to succeed to the throne of that great empire, he might emulate the example of Solomon's peace as contrasted with the wars that have signalised his father's reign like David's." The Emperor Frederick did not live to fulfil any such happy prophecy.

This was the first occasion on which J. G. Alexander's work led him to attempt intervention in the affairs of states; the failure of his mission only led him to more intense efforts.

From Berlin he went for his health to join his elder brother in North Italy, and experienced the thrills of an exciting climb over the Diavolezza and the Morteratsch glacier, where the guide lost the

track under the snow and by the time they reached the path to Pontresina again it was after eight o'clock, and J. G. Alexander was completely exhausted. The guide assisted him, with rests, to Pontresina, and next day he was apparently none the worse for the experience.

When he was in England he continued to take an active share in Friends' meetings and other activities both in London and the West country.

In 1879 he took high honours in his final examination for the LL.B., and for a good many years he continued to practise at the Bar. His practice was never large. Perhaps in spite of his anticipations it never could have been. It was contrary to his nature to set as much store by professional advantage as is normally required for a successful barrister. He also refused to accept briefs for cases which he believed to be unjust.

During J. G. Alexander's frequent visits to Reigate he enjoyed the friendship and companionship in religious activities of the sons of Joseph Crosfield, a member of the Society of Friends, who had undertaken various important services on behalf of his faith. He was among the first to enter Paris carrying relief for the population after the siege of 1871. As early as 1872, J. G. Alexander felt a strong desire and conviction that Joseph Crosfield's eldest daughter, Josephine, might become his wife. But before opening the matter to her, he must establish his position as a barrister ; and meanwhile Josephine Crosfield managed her father's household. In 1879 Joseph Crosfield died, and in June, 1881,

Joseph Gundry Alexander, now thirty-three years old, and Josephine Crosfield, were happily married.

They settled at Croydon, where four sons were born. J. G. Alexander continued to practise as a barrister and devoted much time and energy to several philanthropic labours.

From this point in his life it seems best to treat these various activities separately, and it will be convenient to begin with the International Law Association, whose congresses he had already attended and of which he became honorary secretary in 1885. At the same time, we can notice his work for the anti-slavery cause, partly in connection with this Association, and partly with the Anti-Slavery Society.

CHAPTER III

INTERNATIONAL LAW

1879-1905

WE have seen that J. G. Alexander's first work for the International Law Association was primarily of a juridical nature, in connection with International Patent Law. At a later Congress he read a paper on Foreign Judgments, and for some years served on a committee engaged in an effort to draft rules for general application on this subject. But he soon showed that his general interest in international law was, in the main, due to the possibility of making it serve great humanitarian causes. In its early days the Association was inclined to devote most of its energies to working for practical results in the codification of international law on specific matters of varying importance. The unification of maritime law was suggested as its exclusive province, and several of the early Congress reports are mainly occupied with discussions of Maritime Law. The success achieved by the Association in unifying the rules of "General Average"—concerning damage to and loss of ships with cargo and freight—and the inclusion of eminent maritime lawyers and leading representatives of maritime interests among its members gave it the opportunity for authoritative action. At a later time, in 1896, the Association

was offered the leadership of the movement for the codification of Maritime Law. This highly flattering proposal was rejected because the Association's executive felt that neither did its original *raison d'être* admit of such a change, nor was its organisation adapted for obtaining successful results in a highly special field of law, however important. J. G. Alexander had a large share in the discussion, urging the largest possible basis for the work of the Association. It continued, however, to do useful work in the sphere of Maritime Law, and gave friendly assistance and support to the work of the Comité Maritime International which has framed and obtained national and international legal sanction for various codes of maritime law.

The relationship of the Association to the Institute of International Law, which had come into being in the same year, 1873, was similar though less close. In a historical introduction to the report of the Association in 1903, J. G. Alexander explains that "The Institute is a purely scientific body, composed of experts, elected by co-option, whose qualification is that they have already contributed by published writings of acknowledged merit to the development of International Law. The Association welcomes to its membership not only lawyers, whether or not specialists in international law, but ship-owners, underwriters, merchants and phil-anthropists, and receives delegates from affiliated bodies, such as Chambers of Commerce and Shipping, and Arbitration or Peace Societies, thus admitting all who, from whatever point of view, are interested

in the improvement of international relations. This difference of constitution has naturally led to a corresponding difference in the nature of the work done. The Institute has applied itself to the scientific study of the various branches of International Law, and has adopted series of resolutions or drafted model codes on a great number of subjects, falling under the heads of Public or Private International Law. . . .

“ Our Association, without attempting this purely scientific treatment of questions of International Law, has occupied itself in popularising such questions by public discussion, in bringing to bear on their solution the suggestions of practical men—shipowners, merchants, and practising lawyers of different nationalities—and in formulating recommendations likely to have practical effect.”

Actually, the Association's scope was broad enough to include scientific code-making at the one extreme, and anti-war propaganda at the other. But in all its discussions and resolutions it remained essentially practical, becoming neither academic nor utopian. J. G. Alexander continued to take a useful part in the elucidation of such questions as Maritime Law, Foreign Judgments and other affairs that claimed the Association's attention. But the two subjects to which he gave his full energies from year to year were International Arbitration and the protection of the African natives from European and Asiatic exploitation. In this chapter accordingly it will be sufficient to follow his work from Congress to Congress on behalf of these two causes.

His first paper read to the Association was on "International Law affecting the Slave Trade" at the London Conference of 1879, following his mission to Berlin on behalf of the Anti-Slavery Society the year before. In this paper he traced first the growth of the anti-slavery movement, in the separate nations, from the abolition of the slave trade by Denmark in 1792 to the American Civil War and the abolition of slavery in Brazil, which had put an end to the West African slave-trade, and ended slavery so far as Christendom was concerned, except in Cuba. Internationally, efforts had been made by the British representatives to proscribe the slave-trade as piracy at the Conference of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818 and at Verona in 1822; but these failed before the then uncompromising attitude of the French government. Bi-lateral treaties for the suppression of the trade had been arranged between all the Christian Powers and States, Great Britain having signed twenty-four such treaties by 1850, but the Turkish government still remained outside all such agreements. The Congress of Berlin, in 1878, therefore, at which Turkey was represented, seemed a golden opportunity for getting an agreement to bring slavery under the international law against piracy. One of the Turkish representatives intimated that they would not be likely to raise any objection to the proposal, and the French warmly approved: the British representatives alone raised objections and the opportunity was lost. "In the cause of philanthropy, however," urged J. G. Alexander, "it is never lawful to acquiesce in failure,

however disheartening it may be." Not only was the Anti-Slavery Society renewing its efforts, but from the more legal point of view, J. G. Alexander urged the International Law Association to work for a declaration of the Powers making the slave-trade piracy.

No action, however, except the printing of J. G. Alexander's paper in the proceedings, which were habitually sent by the President to all governments, was taken by the Association till four years later. At the Milan Congress of that year (1883), Senhor Nabuco, President of the Brazil Anti-Slavery Society, distributed the paper of 1879 once more among the members of the Congress, read a further commentary on the international situation with regard to slavery, and proposed certain resolutions. The Congress adjourned whilst a committee, of which J. G. Alexander was a member, revised these resolutions. The final draft demanded that the slave-trade should be assimilated in international law to piracy; it insisted that in spite of certain judgments by great judges in England and America, every nation is justified in refusing in any way to recognise the institution, that extradition of slaves is on precisely the same footing as extradition of freemen, and that all subjects of States should be forbidden from participating in slavery or the slave-trade in any place or circumstance whatever. These resolutions were carried by acclamation.

Earlier in the same Congress, after papers read by the President, Sir Travers Twiss, and by a member

of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, on the proposed International Protectorate of the Congo, J. G. Alexander moved a resolution in favour of the formation of an international Congo commission to preserve order and suppress piracy and the slave-trade, but the Congress deferred the matter till the following year.

The Milan Congress was also the first at which he intervened in a discussion on International Arbitration. This was to support a resolution moved by Henry Richard, M.P., friend and colleague of Richard Cobden, expressing the desire that all States should follow the practice then growing up of inserting arbitration clauses in any treaties of a suitable nature they might make with one another.

The 1885 Congress, the first after J. G. Alexander's appointment as honorary secretary, met at Hamburg. Nearly all the time was devoted to Maritime Law and other juridical matters, so that some of the cautious members who had perhaps been frightened at the appointment of such a humanitarian honorary secretary may well have been lulled into a false sense of security from revolutionary proposals for perpetual peace.

At the Congresses of 1887 and 1890, held in London and Liverpool respectively, the progress of International Arbitration was discussed, but J. G. Alexander did not take much part in these discussions in open Congress. At the latter Congress he reported on the Brussels Anti-Slavery Conference, called by the British Government earlier in the year (1890) in consequence of representations made by

the Anti-Slavery Society. He prefaced his paper with an outline of events, in some of which he had himself (though he did not mention it) taken a notable part, since the Milan Congress of 1883. A deputation from the Anti-Slavery Society, in which J. G. Alexander took a leading part, had waited on Lord Granville, British Foreign Minister, in 1884, before the first Congo Conference of the Powers met at Berlin. This deputation had recognised the justice of certain objections raised by Professor Bluntschli to assimilating the slave-trade to piracy and had accordingly proposed instead that the Slave Trade might be declared illegal by international law, but that offenders should be tried by specially constituted international tribunals, not as if they were pirates. But the Powers represented at the Berlin Congo Conference did accordingly declare that they would not allow any form of slavery or slave-trade in the whole Congo area. Incidentally, in its preamble this clause admitted slavery to be contrary to the law of nations.

The Brussels Conference of the Powers had gone forward from this useful beginning, and had, in fact, gone further than the resolutions of the Milan Congress of the International Law Association. In J. G. Alexander's words, "It has worked out the whole subject of the slave trade by sea and on land, and fenced it round with provisions which, if progressively enforced, as civilisation and commerce continue to advance inland from the coasts into the interior of Africa must ere long put a stop to the devastation of some of the fairest portions of the

world's surface by the crimes and barbarities of slave-raids." And this was only part of its work. Two further articles dealt effectively with the question of fugitive slaves, stringent provisions were adopted for preventing the importation of fire-arms, and for restricting the traffic in spirituous liquors in a great section of Central Africa ; whilst the three Muhammadan states represented at the Conference, Persia, Turkey and Zanzibar, agreed to special stipulations for the limitations of slavery within their dominions. J. G. Alexander observed that Lord Salisbury had made the fullest atonement for his apparent lukewarmness twelve years before. He greeted the Treaty as a veritable Magna Charta for Africa ; and " to those who have long been labouring to secure for the less advanced communities of mankind freedom from oppression and violence, especially as they are incidental to the hateful traffic in human beings, the decisions came as a happy reward for much arduous work—sometimes no less arduous because in civilised countries no voice is any longer raised to defend the ' sum of all villainies,' so that the contest has had to be waged against apathy and indifference, rather than against active opposition." Alas ! liberty is not secured by a Magna Charta alone ; the days came when the story of Congo atrocities filled Europe with horror, and when the dark design that prompted King Leopold's " noble efforts for the cause [of anti-slavery] in connection with the Congo " was manifest ; and J. G. Alexander had sadly to confess that the scepticism of Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, British

Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, which seemed so unreasonable at the time, was justified ; that the casting out of " the sum of all villainies " had only left the Congo swept and garnished for the introduction of seven devils worse than the first. Yet even in face of that horrible disillusionment he did not despair, but immediately joined in the effort to save the Congo from its cruel task-master. To that, however, we must return later.

Further discussion of the relationship of the European Powers to Africa and of the progress of international arbitration took place at the Genoa Congress in 1892, but the Congress was mainly occupied with more juridical matters.

One of the most useful of all these Congresses was held at Brussels in 1895. After the death of some of the early protagonists of International Arbitration, J. G. Alexander evidently felt it incumbent on him to give more active support to those, especially Sir Walter Phillimore (now Lord Phillimore) and Dr. Evans Darby, who were now leading the movement, and in 1893 he seconded Dr. Darby's proposal that a committee be formed to draft rules for International Courts of Arbitration. This Committee reported in 1895. At the opening of the Congress Sir Richard Webster, the President, then Attorney-General, later Lord Chief Justice as Lord Alverstone, pointed out that the desirability of Arbitration was now generally admitted ; a further stage was reached, that of drafting rules to make Arbitration as effective as possible. Nearly two days were given to the discussion of the proposals of the

committee, and of a more elaborate set of rules drafted by Marquis Corsi, professor of International Law at Pisa.

The rules finally approved contain exact proposals for the working of tribunals, and for defining the relevance of evidence. The first rule that when Arbitration treaties are signed, the class of difference to be referred should be defined, was unfortunately not followed in the Hague proposal; what appears to be a more thorough reference, but is really much less so, was substituted, of referring all disputes except those concerning honour and vital interests; and the interpretation of honour and vital interests is left to each separate party. In fact, therefore, this wise proposal of defining classes of dispute to be referred has not been commonly adopted. Other parts of the proposed rules, however, seem to have influenced the procedure of international tribunals; and this is not surprising since the Congress included the British Attorney-General, "the bâtonnier of the Brussels Bar, the leader of the English Admiralty Bar, and other members of the legal profession, including some of great eminence, from Belgium, England, France, Holland and Italy," as well as other notable publicists of several nations.

The work of the Brussels Anti-Slavery Convention was also again discussed, J. G. Alexander reading a paper on the Slave-Trade since the signing of the Convention. He was able to point to considerable development of communications into the heart of Africa, and to satisfactory measures for the

suppression of the slave trade generally, and of slavery in the Congo and in the Italian colony of Eritrea. But the French, German and British governments had not abolished slavery in their Central African territories ; in Zanzibar, where the British Government had lately assumed a Protectorate, an enquiry of the Anti-Slavery Society had shown that conditions were as bad as ever. In fact, the failure of the Brussels Convention to condemn the institution of slavery, the root of the slave traffic that they were trying to destroy, had left the aborigines of a great part of Africa in little better plight than they were before. They could not be shipped to America or Asia, but in Africa itself they had no right whatever. The Association readily agreed to a resolution urging that " all European nations should in their African possessions and protectorates, cease to recognise slavery as a status implying the deprivation of legal rights, and should thus put an end to slavery and to the cruel slave raids by which it is fed, without any violent subversion of existing domestic institutions." The significance of the proposed method is that slaves, when liberated, instead of being almost forced to leave their masters, simply acquire the right to do so if or when they wish. This was the action that had been taken in India, on the Gold Coast and in the Congo State, and in all these countries it had been effective.

Those who have had any experience of the kind, will appreciate the labour involved in preparing the work of Conferences in various parts of the world for more than ten years. In 1896, J. G.

Alexander's work as honorary secretary was lightened by the addition of a colleague, Mr. G. G. Phillimore, with whom he continued in happy partnership for nine more years.

Before the Congress of 1895 concluded its labours on Arbitration, it appointed another committee, of which J. G. Alexander was again a member, to draft rules for the formation of Tribunals. No further congress was held until 1899, when a distinguished assembly met at Buffalo, U.S.A. By that time the Hague Peace Conference had met, and established an International Tribunal, so that part of the work of the Association's committee was already very happily superseded. However, the committee's proposal was in various ways more far-reaching than the constitution of the Hague Court; it included the recommendations that all disputes not settled by diplomatic means be referred to arbitration, and that the Court when constituted should give special attention to the establishment and development of a code of International Law with a recognised authority. The committee's proposal was therefore approved by the Congress, which then proceeded to pass a further resolution, moved by J. G. Alexander, expressing deep gratification at the adoption by the Hague Peace Conference of a scheme of International Arbitration. It recognised as especially valuable the nomination of men of recognised legal competence and enjoying public confidence to act as arbitrators; the principle of selection of members from this body to form with an umpire a tribunal in any dispute; the creation of a permanent

administrative council at the Hague ; and the establishment under this council of a permanent bureau. The Congress accordingly urged early ratification, and the promotion of treaties between states to submit disputes to the Hague Court. The more detailed examination of the decisions of the Hague Conference was referred to a strong committee, in which J. G. Alexander acted as secretary, with instructions to report next year. This committee accordingly reported at Rouen in 1900. The report pointed out that the International Arbitration Convention did not provide for so-called " compulsory " arbitration, that it provided for mediation as well as for arbitration, that it did not define the controversies which might be the subjects of mediation, inquiry or arbitration, and that no sanction was provided to enforce a judgment. But without discussing whether these features were good or bad the report suggested that no good object would be served by criticism, until the scheme had had some time to prove itself ; its general principle was held to be sound. Accordingly the Association passed no further resolution or recommendations except to encourage the Powers who had ratified the Convention to appoint the Judges and constitute the permanent Council as soon as possible.

At Rouen, J. G. Alexander read a further paper on the advance that had been made towards the Abolition of Slavery since 1895. In Zanzibar the British Government had refused to take definite action, partly on the ground that it was inadvisable to interfere forcibly with Muslim customs. In 1896

a deputation from the Society of Friends had waited on the British Foreign Minister, and J. G. Alexander took the opportunity of pointing out "that Islam in no wise enjoins slavery; on the contrary the Koran regards the liberation of slaves as a meritorious action. According to a decision of the supreme judicial authority of the Muhammadans in British India at the beginning of this century, the detention by Muhammadans of their co-religionists as slaves is contrary to their religion; and the example of the Bey of Tunis, who abolished slavery in 1840 as an act of piety and justice, may well encourage Christian Governments of Muhammadan countries in the same direction." But the British Government refused to be encouraged even to emulate the Bey of Tunis; and although the new Sultan of Zanzibar, faced with growing agitation in England, issued in 1897 a declaration abolishing the legal status of slavery, J. G. Alexander had to report to the Rouen Congress that, in spite of continued agitation, most of the slaves were still in bondage, and the authorities still supported the masters. In Madagascar, on the other hand, the French resident-general, M. Hippolyte Laroche, had succeeded in abolishing slavery, and good progress had been made in Uganda, Egypt and Nigeria, but in the countries of North Africa not then under the control of Christian States, Tripoli and Morocco, slavery still flourished, and in spite of the law a certain amount of trading was still carried on by small Arab traders between various European protectorates and the Egyptian coast, on the one hand, and Arabia and Persia on the other. Here

the French authorities had been somewhat to blame, but they had now issued rigorous instructions to suppress this coastal trade ; the British government, on the other hand, continued to equivocate over Zanzibar slavery.

A notable paragraph from this paper will show that J. G. Alexander was even at this time by no means a narrow "abolitionist," who thought the abolition of slavery alone would achieve happiness and liberty for the people of Africa. "Abuses which are suppressed in one form," he said, "tend to re-appear in another ; strong men without principle are always ready to exploit and rule their fellows. Forced labour in mines or plantations—oppressive contracts made with emigrants—monopolies of the chief products of certain countries—military service imposed on native races—all these may constitute slavery in disguise. Constant vigilance is, in this sphere as in so many others, the only means of safeguarding the interests of justice and humanity, which are, in a word, the true interests of commerce and society itself against the encroachments of egotism."

In 1901, at the Congress of the Association in Glasgow, J. G. Alexander contributed his last paper. This was an account and careful criticism of the provisions of three abortive treaties for general arbitration which had preceded the Hague Convention. Of these, the treaty between Great Britain and the United States would have been enacted but for the constitutional provision of the United States requiring a two-thirds majority of the Senate. He

also drew attention to resolutions of Congress, adopted in 1890, in favour of general arbitration treaties with all foreign governments, of the French Chamber of Deputies in July, 1895, inviting the Government to negotiate a permanent arbitration treaty with the United States. His final suggestion was that, now that the Hague Tribunal was in existence, and general arbitration treaties had been urged upon the nations by their representatives assembled at the Hague in 1899, Great Britain, France and the United States should set the example, which he felt sure other States would readily follow, by making general arbitration treaties with one another. Mr. (afterwards Sir) Thos. Barclay followed with a paper urging a Franco-British arbitration agreement, and moved resolutions, which were adopted, in favour of the conclusion of such a treaty between France and Great Britain and the continuation of negotiations for a treaty between Britain and America. By these papers and resolutions the Association helped to pave the way for the Franco-British agreement of 1903, on which the Entente Cordiale was based.

J. G. Alexander took an active part in the Congress at Antwerp, in 1903, and moved a resolution urging the Powers to follow the example of the United States and Mexico in referring differences to the Hague Court.

In 1905, he attended the Congress at Christiania, and then, after twenty-two years, resigned from the honorary secretaryship. From that time on his work for International Arbitration and peace was

carried on mainly through the channel of the international peace movement, whilst he continued an active member of the Anti-Slavery Society's Committee. Thus his two main interests in the work of the International Law Association were continued in other channels, where he was able to give them undivided attention. He had long since ceased to practise as a barrister, so that the legal aspects of international law reform interested him less than formerly.

In reviewing the work of the International Law Association during J. G. Alexander's connection with it, one cannot fail to be struck by the fact that the Association frequently anticipated governmental action in a remarkable way. But this is no coincidence. Partly, no doubt, it is because the Association discussed affairs that were exercising the public mind from time to time ; but partly also, as Lord Alverstone assured the Association, when he presided over its Glasgow Congress in 1901, it was because the governments did make use of the careful and statesman-like labours of the Association in promoting international law.

Of J. G. Alexander's part in this work, and of his characteristics as a worker in committee and Congress two of his colleagues have written briefly. Mr. G. G. Phillimore, who was his co-secretary for ten years, notes that " his colleagues in the Executive of that Society will always remember his quiet tenacity of purpose in holding steadfastly to the larger ideals of international peace and unity of ideas and actions as the field of its work. The

historical sketch of the Association's record which prefaces every volume of its proceedings, was penned by him ; and the propagandist nature of its organisation and its work was thoroughly congenial to him." " It is largely owing to the force of his convictions on these (Arbitration and Subject Races) and kindred subjects as preponderating in importance over the more legal questions of International Law, that the Association retains its flexibility as a moral instrument for the promotion of international unity in any questions of international interest and bearing which may from time to time require to be considered by thinkers and social reformers. To vary slightly a well-known phrase, ' The price of international unity is eternal vigilance,' and it is the function of the international jurist to keep replenished the store of moral energy in International Law which directs the harmonious movement of the world."

Dr. Thomas Baty, legal adviser to the Japanese Imperial Foreign Ministry, writes :—" I cannot say that my acquaintance with Mr. Alexander was very extensive or intimate ; it was limited to occasional meetings at the committees of the International Association and of the National Peace Council. I came most closely into contact with him at the time of the International Law Association Conference of 1905, when Mr. G. G. Phillimore and he initiated me into the mysteries of the secretariat.

" He was exceedingly businesslike and methodical ; and combined these qualities, in a quite uncommon fashion, with profound philanthropic sympathies and a contempt for opportunism. His keen

logical faculty made him carry his humane ideas to their logical consequences ; and accordingly he saw through the futility of the compromising half-measures which are dear to the heart of the philanthropic politician. Logic, not sentiment, often ranged him on the side of what seemed to be the extremists. It was not a want of moderation : no-one was ever less precipitate : it was simply a perception of necessary consequences which the opportunist tries to blink.

“ ‘ Sagacity,’ I think, is the first quality that one would think of in giving an impression of Mr. Alexander. He was not a person who by any means wore his heart on his sleeve ; and his real kindness was not always apparent on a casual meeting. Severe economy of time led him to appear sometimes careless of social amenities ; but those who were admitted to his friendship found his a sterling and devoted nature ; true and honourable far beyond the common, and always to be depended upon for sense, insight and unwearied industry.”

CHAPTER IV

THE OPIUM COMMISSION IN INDIA

1893-4

BEFORE describing J. G. Alexander's later work for peace and for subject races we must turn our attention to other undertakings in which he was engaged during the first twenty years of his married life.

In 1881, the year of his marriage, he entered upon what proved, more perhaps than any other single effort, to be his life-work ; this was the movement to end the trade in opium between India and China.

The Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade between India and China was first formed at the end of 1874. Parliamentary action had been taken from time to time before this, by Lord Shaftesbury in both Houses and by Sir Wilfrid Lawson in the House of Commons, but without avail. After the formation of the society the agitation against the traffic both in Parliament and outside increased considerably. A monthly magazine called *The Friend of China* was published, lectures and addresses were arranged and pamphlets written. Auxiliaries were formed in large cities, and funds raised for propagandist purposes. In the early days of the society every effort seemed to meet with a response. Large sums of money were raised ; in 1881 a meeting was held at the Mansion House,

to which thirty towns sent delegates ; in 1882, four hundred and eighty-nine petitions for the abolition of the Opium Trade were presented to Parliament. During these years the actual status of the opium trade was in dispute. In J. G. Alexander's *résumé* of the proceedings in Parliament, contributed to *The Friend of China*, in July, 1917, after victory had been achieved, he wrote :

“ In 1876, Sir Thomas Wade, British Minister at Peking, signed the Chefoo Convention, by which China agreed to make amends for the murder of Mr. Margary, near her western frontier. It contained a clause relating to opium, and securing to the Chinese certain provincial duties known as li-kin, the amount of which was left undefined. The Indian Government and the opium merchants objected to this provision, fearing that the Chinese would use it to impose prohibitory duties ; the Convention, in consequence, remained unratified for nine years, though the Chinese Government loyally performed its part of the bargain. This question was repeatedly brought before Parliament, in the House of Lords, in 1878 by the Earl of Aberdeen, and in 1879 by the Earl of Carnarvon ; in the House of Commons in 1880 and 1883, by Mr. (afterwards Sir) Joseph W. Pease. In 1885, this controversy was settled by an additional article of the Convention, under which the Chinese Government, whilst obtaining a larger share in the profits of the Opium Traffic than it had anticipated, apparently surrendered its claim to total prohibition.” Next year, when Sir Joseph Pease moved a resolution in the House of

Commons looking to the termination of poppy growth in India, except for medical purposes, the debate ended in a count-out.

The additional article of 1885, and this failure in Parliament, seriously checked the vigour of the Anti-Opium movement. The first enthusiasm of the Society had ebbed; there were difficulties between the London secretary and the travelling organiser; subscriptions died down; the different motives with which anti-opium workers approached the subject were finding expression through several organisations, inevitably relatively weak, though it was found possible to keep together an Anti-Opium Board, where representatives of each Society discussed the position and their policy from time to time.

Such is often the fate of forward movements. Those who undertake unpopular missions in the world are apt to have something of the fanatic in their nature, and are therefore inclined to regard the subject from a peculiar angle and with somewhat narrow vision. Each feels that his or her way to the goal is the only true way, and looks askance at others who are approaching the matter from a different standpoint, even though the goal of each may be identical. From this narrowness of enthusiasm J. G. Alexander was singularly free. Single-minded and determined as he was to work with his full strength in many an unpopular cause, he showed throughout his life a growing capacity for understanding the outlook, both of others who, from a different position, were working for the same end,

and also of his opponents. His uniting spirit was of no small service to the anti-opium cause. Himself a member of the parent society, he helped to preserve harmony in the Anti-Opium Board and in the whole movement : he could and did unite with those who met for prayer no less than with those who tried to move public opinion, Parliament and the Government by other methods. He himself laboured untiringly to keep himself fully informed of every fresh development in China and India, docketing every relevant fact not only amongst bundles of references, but also in a memory which was as remarkably good in this respect as it was bad where more personal circumstances were concerned. One of his colleagues observes, " He possessed a business mind and good capacity for detecting the value of evidence. An excellent memory enabled him to make full use of his knowledge and to keep in touch with a wide circle of friends and acquaintances with whom he had come in contact while engaged on this and other good causes."

" On the platform, without any attempt at eloquence, he was clear in his statements and in the marshalling of his abundant facts. If he had a fault it was to provide too much solid matter for the digestion of general audiences not endued with the historic instincts he possessed."

During these years, and for many more, he was editor of *The Friend of China*, on which " he bestowed all the loving care of a parent ; and it was only the impulse of great devotion that can have enabled him to maintain its successive issues through

long and trying years without any shadow of doubt crossing its pages, as to the ultimate victory."

In the late eighties the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade had to give up its paid secretary, and a couple of years later it was even forced to consider whether to continue its work at all; but faith and courage prevailed, a new start was made, and in 1889 J. G. Alexander was appointed secretary. In 1891, a resolution moved in the House of Commons by Sir Joseph Pease, "which declared the system by which the Indian Opium revenue was raised to be 'morally indefensible,' was approved by a majority of 160 to 130 votes. The motion, however, did not actually become a resolution of the House, as Sir Robert Fowler proposed an amendment pledging the House to re-imburse to the Indian Government any deficiency caused by suppression, which there was not time to discuss." Following this successful vote the promoters of the cause, in Parliament and outside, re-doubled their activities. Finally, "in 1893, Mr. Alfred Webb moved for a Royal Commission to enquire what retrenchments and reforms in Indian expenditure could be effected, how Indian resources could best be developed, and what help would be needed from the British Exchequer, in order to carry out the suppression of the Opium Traffic. Under pressure from the Secretary of State for India, the Earl of Kimberley, who declared that he would resign his office rather than consent to a resolution implying that the Indian Opium Revenue was to be surrendered, Mr. Gladstone appeared, not

for the first time, in defence of the traffic which, as a young man [in 1840] he had so strongly condemned. The Government carried by a majority of 184 to 105 votes, an amendment in favour of a Commission of a very different character, instructed to enquire generally into the whole question of the production and consumption of opium in India." Perhaps it may seem only natural that an "unprejudiced" commission of this kind should appeal to the fairplay of the House of Commons. But it is to be noticed that the terms of reference really had very little connection with the question at issue. The objection to the Trade was not, primarily at any rate, that the conditions of labour in the production of Indian opium were unsatisfactory, nor, indeed, had it anything to do with the question of Indian production at all. The whole argument was that the forcing of the drug on China by treaty was "morally indefensible"; to this the House of Commons had agreed. It was therefore reasonable and logical for the House to proceed, as urged by Mr. Webb, to consider how the "morally indefensible" trade could be ended in such a way as to do the least possible harm to the Indian opium-growers and the Indian Government revenue.

However, the Government had its way, and the Commission was appointed. The Society had to make the best of a difficult position. One of its members, W. S. Caine, a leader of the Anti-Opium cause in Parliament, was appointed on the Commission, but he was prevented from serving. His place was taken at the fourth meeting of the

Commission in London by Henry J. Wilson, M.P., who had not up to that time been conspicuous as an anti-opium member, but was a convinced opponent of the traffic. The Commission was presided over by Lord Brassey. Its other members were Sir J. B. Lyall, a former Governor-General of the Punjab; the Maharajah of Darbhanga, an Indian dignitary and landowner; Sir William Roberts, a prominent English medical man; Messrs. R. G. C. Mowbray, a Conservative Member of Parliament, opposed to interference with the trade; A. V. Fanshawe, of the Indian Civil Service, Postmaster-General; Arthur Pease, supposed to be an opponent of the traffic; and Haridas Veharidas, Dewar or Prime Minister of Junargarh, appointed to represent the Native States.

A certain amount of evidence was taken by the Commission in London in September, 1893, and J. G. Alexander was one of the witnesses called. He was also sent by the Society, as its secretary, to accompany the Commission to India, where "he gave himself diligently to the task of analysing and tabulating facts and evidence, duties for which he was particularly well suited."

H. J. Wilson and he travelled together from England, starting a little before the other English members of the Commission, in order to cross India and collect some first-hand evidence of the attitude of Indians to opium, and its effect upon them, before the Commission began its work. They spent a week in Bombay, and visited various centres, J. G. Alexander himself going to Sohagpur, Gya and Patna, before reaching Calcutta.

The first few days in Bombay were sufficient to show that a hard task lay before them. "It has been a very interesting week in Bombay," writes J. G. Alexander, "in some respects discouraging, as we have heard from so many quarters where we should have expected sympathy, that the evil is greatly exaggerated. . . . A fuller acquaintance with the facts and circumstances enables one to discount largely the opinions of the native gentlemen and European employers as to the comparative harmlessness of the habit. Last evening we had our anti-opium gathering at A. S. Dyer's when a small number of missionaries, nearly all American, who have really gone below the surface in this matter, were assembled to meet us. Their evidence is very clear and it has been confirmed to us this morning by an English missionary. He is not one who has made a speciality of the subject like those we met last night; it is, therefore, all the more weighty when he says that anyone who really lives among the natives, as he has always done, cannot fail to see the great evils arising from opium. It is the missionaries who live altogether above the natives, and the native gentlemen who know little of the lot of the masses, who fail to see this evil. Amongst the latter, especially amongst the Parsees, whom we have chiefly talked with, there is also a strong disposition to take their cue from the officials in this bureaucratic country, where almost every position to which a man of ability and ambition can aspire is at the disposal of the Government, and those who run counter to its views thereby cut themselves off from most of the best

positions. And the influence of the semi-official press, with the dread of increased taxation, tells in the same direction. Our movement, therefore, is not a popular one amongst the class which alone can be spoken of as having any public opinion. I told the temperance committee the other night that if India does not want protection from the opium habit, such as we possess at home, we don't wish to force it on her—to protect China is our great aim, and we are quite determined that in carrying out that aim India shall not be made to suffer pecuniarily."

Everywhere it was necessary to insist on these points. The action taken by the Government had put the anti-opium party into a very difficult position. In India it was supposed—and the supposition was encouraged by the press—that this unpopular Commission had been forced on the Government by the anti-opium agitators, men in England who were trying to interfere with the domestic affairs of India. So, on the one hand it was necessary to try and point out that the Commission was not what the agitators wanted, and that they were only concerned with the China trade; and on the other hand, having had the Commission forced upon them, the anti-opiumists had to do their best to show that the opium habit was doing harm to India, that a part, at least, of Indian public opinion was hostile to poppy culture, and that the trade might be diminished without serious effects on the finances of the Indian Government. And evidence of this nature had to be collected in a few weeks, by

one or two Englishmen unacquainted with India, to counter-act the evidence brought by the all-powerful Government of India. It is true that the Indian Government had promised to collect evidence impartially. But, as we shall see, some of their agents, at any rate, had acted unscrupulously in the selection of witnesses ; and, when everyone knows what kind of evidence an omnipotent government wants, only a very brave man, especially of the conquered people, will, in open session, give evidence opposed to the wishes of his rulers. It seems remarkable that most of the members of the Commission were apparently blind to these things ; perhaps they too, without quite realising it, thought it best to play for safety.

In Gya, H. J. Wilson and J. G. Alexander visited three opium dens ; they found that “ no attempt whatever has been made to carry out the order as to closing opium dens, and in each case they were on the premises of the licensed vendor. . . . There were women in two of the dens, and in one of them were two boys of ten or twelve years old—opium smokers ! One of the smokers, quite unasked, volunteered the statement that they were all killing themselves, and that it would be a good thing if the dens could be closed and they saved. . . . We did not see any very emaciated victims, but the glazed eyes and unearthly look of some of the smokers was very ghastly.”

The Commission began its sittings in India in Calcutta on 18th November, 1893. J. G. Alexander was one of the first witnesses, giving his evidence on the 20th and 21st. He writes, “ On Monday we

began with Bishop Thoburn [of the American Methodist Episcopal Church in India] who was an admirable witness, clear and calm, moderate and weighty. Then I came on, and I fear I did rather badly the first day. I gave an answer an hour long about the history of the wars, disproving the evidence of Wade and Lay, in London, as to England never having forced opium on China. Lord Brassey said it ought to have been put in a memorandum, and no doubt this would have been much better—I had no idea how long it would take me. I was a good deal exhausted after the effort, and somewhat unwell in consequence, but a quiet evening and night's rest set me up again. I hope I did better yesterday, when my examination took just three hours."

This is all he says of himself in his journal letter. Writing home he adds, "I did not get nearly as much heckling as I expected, and I think I got one 'rise' out of Sir James Lyall.* He asked me, on my reading a strong quotation from Sir Herbert Edwardes against the opium traffic, if I knew that Sir Herbert was always considered a bit of a fanatic. I said 'No,'; but I knew that moral reformers who were in advance of their generation were generally considered fanatics." When J. G. Alexander had finished giving his evidence, Lord Brassey "let the cat out of the bag" with regard to the true position of the Indian Government, by saying, "We all appreciate that in the encounter in which you are

* Sir James Lyall was a strong defender of the traffic; but, from the point of view of its antagonists, he was one of the most useful members of the Commission, for he frequently played into their hands by asking postposterous questions.

engaged with the Government of India upon its own ground you are placed in circumstances of no ordinary difficulty."

Although not severely cross-examined by the Commission, J. G. Alexander had to endure another sort of criticism to which at that time he was not much accustomed: "I have been the object," he writes, "of a spiteful article in the *Englishman*, the leading paper here, which circulates among the official classes. I do not propose sending it to you—one feels these things, and yet it is a real honour to be permitted to suffer some obloquy in such a cause. On the other hand, the attitude of the native press here is very encouraging, and the real kindness some of these native gentlemen show goes to one's heart. I think I told you of the editor, Mr. Bose, who said, 'We thank you for coming all the way to India to do good to our country'—he has been helping us in every possible way."

Quite unexpectedly the Brahmo-Somaj gave the anti-opium cause "their sincere and earnest sympathy." "Yesterday, after a little party on board the *Sunbeam*, to which Lord Brassey had kindly asked me to bring some of my missionary friends, Mr. Evans [a missionary who was helping J. G. Alexander in his work] and I went to the Brahmo-Somaj prayer-hall to speak on temperance. I had been impressed with the desirability of Indian temperance reformers formulating a working scheme of local option for India, and then getting it endorsed by a resolution of the House of Commons, and I wished for an opportunity of laying this subject

before a few of the temperance workers. To my surprise, at very short notice, they had their hall filled, with about a thousand people, and I had a most sympathetic audience. They told me that the Brahmo-Somaj has great sympathy with the Society of Friends, holding similar views on war and religious liberty, and being in effect a temperance society, whose members all abstain from intoxicating drinks and drugs."

The Commission heard a number of doctors on the effects of opium. The first of these "simply made himself ridiculous by the extent to which he carried his theory that opium is only used to meet malarious or other unhealthy conditions—he actually told Sir W. Roberts that a man would not want a cheroot after breakfast unless there were something the matter with him." A few days later J. G. Alexander writes: "the interesting feature of the evidence lately has been the absolute conflict of medical opinion. Dr. Wallace, who is a very successful and well-known practitioner, came forward yesterday, at his own request (not as put forward by me) and in a very able statement completely controverted the views of the official and non-official medical men previously adduced by Government. Two native medical men of high position and repute are coming on Tuesday to support him, and I hope we shall also get a largely-signed medical statement controverting the official case."

During his stay in Calcutta, J. G. Alexander had the novel experience of being looked after by a

man-servant. He writes, "I got a bearer yesterday, who will go with me to Burma, and stay with me till we start for Patna, on January 2nd. I found it was expected of me, otherwise the boarding-house man has to do the work." And later, "It is funny to have a man to help me to dress for dinner, etc., but it certainly saves forgetful me a good deal of time, and it suits lazy me very well."

In another letter from Calcutta he shows his appreciation of the trials of Anglo-Indian life. Writing to his wife, he says: "I think this separation will have one good result—it will surely give us a much closer sympathy with the married missionaries, to whom such separations are an almost invariable and inevitable part of married life—and not only with them, but also with government servants and English men of business who have to live in India. In this boarding-house, there are three people some or all of whose children are away in England at school. Much as I object to many things in the tone of officialism here, I more than before realise how real the suffering often is, and how insufficient any pecuniary compensation for separations of this sort, so that in this respect I have learned to sympathise deeply with those who are so bitterly opposing my mission."

Early in December, the Commission divided into two sections, and J. G. Alexander accompanied the half that went to Burma. The situation there was quite unlike that in India. The Government had no economic stake of its own in the growth and sale of opium, and it was trying to obtain greater powers of restriction than the Indian Government would

concede. The latter authority favoured a policy of differential treatment for the Burmans and the other races—chiefly Chinese—of the Burmese community. The financial Commissioner and other government witnesses in Burma advocated total prohibition. The Burmese Government wanted to institute a register of all opium-smokers, but the Indian Government demanded free sale to non-Burmans, and its view prevailed. The Burmese Government, however, took a complete census of opium-consumers, and having ascertained the average daily consumption was fixing a maximum of sales. As the consumers died off the maximum was to be diminished, year by year. Before the Commission at Rangoon, a Government agent sent from Calcutta produced some Chinese, all opium-smokers, to testify on behalf of opium, but J. G. Alexander was able to get a memorial signed by three hundred and five Chinese inhabitants—only one refused to sign it—in favour of restrictions. Sir James Lyall suggested to the sixty Chinese who came to present the memorial that it would have been equally easy to get signatures for a memorial to the opposite effect ; he succeeded in getting them to admit that as many signatures could be got to a petition against compulsory registration, but Mr. Arthur Pease asked whether as many signatures could be got to a memorial in favour of free sale of opium, and the answer was “ No.” “ Sir W. Roberts remarked that the memorial was manifestly absurd because it said ‘ One given to opium, however rich he may be at first, is sure to get very poor afterwards through

using the drug '—a criticism of an oriental document of this kind which is itself so 'absurd' as to show clearly the bias against everything on our side which exists in the minds of some of the Commissioners."

One of the Shan Chiefs, too, the Chief of Thibaw, who had just returned from a visit to England, was interviewed by J. G. Alexander, and told the Commission that "he and the other Shan chiefs would readily join in prohibiting the culture of the poppy and sale of opium in their States if asked by the British Government to do so."

Similar anti-opium evidence was given by a Shan Chief and by Chinese at Mandalay, with regard to Upper Burma, but of the Commissioners who visited Burma all but Mr. Pease seemed to be deaf to such evidence.

At the end of the year J. G. Alexander made up his mind that he must give up his salary as secretary of the Society for the suppression of the Opium Trade. This was partly in view of the difficulty the Society found in raising sufficient funds to carry on its work, partly because of the great claims of London and other distressed districts on those who had money to give away. "Again, it will certainly be a great advantage to my position as advocate of the cause if I can put Hon. Sec. after my name. In the attack on me which appeared in one of the leading Calcutta papers lately, reference was made to the fact that I am called Secretary, not Hon. Sec., that, therefore, I was presumably paid Sec., and that it therefore ill became me to discredit official testimony on the

ground that officials are paid. There is no doubt some truth in this, and I shall be much freer to expose the interested testimony of officials, of which so much has been given before the Commission, if I can show that I am myself disinterested." So, from the first of January, 1894, with his wife's strong approval, he was honorary secretary of the Society until the work was finished in 1917.

The Commission had further sittings in Calcutta over the New Year, and then journeyed through the poppy-growing districts, visiting Patna, Benares, Lucknow, Delhi and other cities before reaching Bombay. During these later sessions various Government witnesses and Government methods were exposed, either by H. J. Wilson's cross-examination or by J. G. Alexander's investigations. "Another stock argument he [H. J. Wilson] absolutely demolished, and Mr. Driberg [a Government witness] had to confess himself mistaken at last. It had been repeatedly alleged, as showing that prohibition would lead to dangerous discontent and probably rebellion, that when the Government stopped the cultivation of the poppy in Assam in 1860 the consequence was a riot ending in the murder of an English official—our witnesses assured us that the riot was nearly a year after the cultivation had been stopped, and was due to the imposition of the obnoxious income or license tax. It was clearly proved that the latter account was much more nearly correct—the discontent was caused by the imposition of two obnoxious new taxes, following on the prohibition of the poppy and consequent great

enhancement of the price of opium. But further, there never would have been a riot but for the folly and perverseness of the two officials concerned, which was the subject of enquiry, and led to as complete a condemnation of their conduct by the Indian Government as has probably ever been recorded. They sum up by saying that of these officials one had paid the penalty of his life for his rashness, and the other was degraded in rank, sent to serve in a distant province, and to be subjected to special supervision as to his future conduct. A better instance of the unreliability of much official evidence could not easily be given."

From Patna, on 3rd January, J. G. Alexander writes, " Here to-day we have had another ' row.' Mr. Wilson insisted, in private discussion, on reading another protest—this time against the proceedings of certain police officials who have been at Gya within the last week, and have been five or six times cross-questioning Prem Chand, the Baptist missionary there, about the visit Mr. Wilson, Mr. Williams and I paid to that town in November. Only this afternoon we hear of a Government witness who has been kept away because he was found so strongly to sympathise with the ryots." The ryots were the cultivators of opium, who were protesting against the Government's methods of forcing them to produce a certain crop each year. " The same sort of thing was done with the Assam witnesses—those who were likely to make admissions against the Government were kept away. But we have had one very fair honest official to-day ; though

opposed to us, he has made statements very much supporting our views."

These matters did not end here. A few days later "Mr. Chand produced to the evident discomfiture of the Indian Government representative some 'dervannahs' or notices from Government warning ryots that money had been 'sent from here' to them for poppy cultivation, and that if they did not cultivate the amount for which they were put down they would be prosecuted under a certain Act. Now that Act only authorises prosecution if the ryot has received 'the advance' and there is a great difference between its being paid by Government to the middleman, and received by the ryot, so that the notice was obviously unjustified." A similar case was brought to light on the following day. In this case Mr. Tytler, "an admirable specimen of an Anglo-Indian official of the best class" confessed, "that it was a most improper form; he had not used it and would not use it."

At Benares, "On the second day our witnesses were heard—a doctor, Isha Chandra Ray, made an excellent impression by his clear, firm, yet temperate statement. He had been invited by the Government to give evidence, but after they had seen his abstract, they told him he would not be wanted. The whole correspondence was read out and Mr. Dane, who managed the case on behalf of the Government, was allowed later in the day to read a statement which was to the effect that a great many witnesses had had to be weeded out, and that several of them were pro-opiumists. That was all.

Dr. Ray had mentioned three others who had similar notices that they were not wanted, and one of them, a zemindar (landowner) who also practises as a doctor, afterwards gave evidence on our side.

“Of course, if Dr. Ray had been an unimportant witness there might have been force in Mr. Dane’s excuse, but as he was undoubtedly one of the very best witnesses on either side that the Commission had had before it, and his statement as read to the Commission was practically the same as sent in originally, there can be no doubt that he was excluded because he was found not to favour the Indian Government view.”

Worse things happened than this. From Bombay, on 16th February, J. G. Alexander writes : “This morning there is a fresh incident—on getting home from the Commission soon after four I found a note from Dr. Phillips saying that our four witnesses at Jaypore are all in prison ! So I had to drive off to Government House at once to get the Secretary to wire to the Political Resident at Jaypore to obtain their release. I am sorry for the poor men, but it will be a splendid thing for our cause, and will clearly show how little value is to be attached to the mass of pro-opium evidence received from the Native States generally.”

The Commission ended its public sittings on the 22nd February, 1894. Their report, issued in 1895, was much as J. G. Alexander had anticipated. In the words of *The Cambridge Modern History*,* “The Commission found that the evil effects of the

* *Cambridge Modern History*. Vol. XII. Chap. 16., pp. 485-486.

drug in India had been greatly exaggerated ; they drew a parallel between its temperate use and that of alcohol in England, and intimated that prohibition was not more necessary in the one case than in the other. They threw upon the Chinese Government the burden of taking action if it wished the importation of opium forbidden, and claimed that the state monopoly really amounted to a restriction of cultivation, since it was confined to definite areas. The Indian product was at least opium in its best and purest form. Deprived of it, the Chinese would only have recourse to the home-grown supply, which was in every way inferior. Finally—a reason that probably outweighed all others in the opinion of politicians—the Commissioners considered that the Indian revenues could not at present afford the financial loss that would be entailed by prohibition. The report," adds Mr. P. E. Roberts, the writer of this chapter, "has by no means put an end to the anti-opium agitation, the promoters of which are prepared to challenge many of the statements of fact put forward by the Commission." The first challenge was H. J. Wilson's minority report, wholly antagonistic to the findings of his fellow-commissioners. And J. G. Alexander had written from Calcutta, "The Commissioners have had to choose between believing officials, especially official doctors, on the one side, and missionaries, including medical missionaries, with some little native opinion to back them, on the other side. They have adopted the official view : I do not believe the people of England will follow them ; I am perfectly confident that a popular

audience in England will accept the word of the missionaries against that of the officials, and the more strongly the contrast between the two is brought out—well, so much the worse for the officials.”

Although he was so fully occupied in preparing evidence for the Commission, J. G. Alexander missed no opportunity of sight-seeing, and tried to obtain some insight into the life of India. In particular he came into close contact with the missionaries wherever he went. He always attended services and prayer-meetings, and got help from them ; and he was always ready to relieve the missionary from the deadening round of spiritual duties by taking a service or preaching a sermon.

Probably the most notable characteristic of his contact with the Indians themselves was that he behaved towards them just as he would behave towards Englishmen or any other men. He always treated his fellow-men as beings like himself, or, it might be better to say, as beings containing some seed of the Divine, whatever their colour or race. If he found some racial or personal characteristic that he disliked he was ready to excuse it on the ground of environment or other unfortunate circumstance ; but he looked not for the things that separate men, but for those that unite. He assumed that every man he met would care in some way for the pursuit of what was good. When he had established some community of interest with a fellow-being, European or Asiatic, nothing else mattered. At this stage, and indeed throughout his life, he was happiest and most contented amongst those who, like

himself, found daily help and inspiration from the Bible and from family prayer ; but, whilst it grieved him to think that any of his fellow-men should be ignorant of what he felt to be the priceless value of that inspiration, yet he gladly joined with any man who would tread even a few steps along his path.

His letters home, especially, perhaps, those to his sons, are full of vivid descriptions—clear and straightforward without wordiness—of the things he saw, such as a Parsee wedding he attended at Bombay, descriptions of monkeys and other animals and birds, heard or seen, the pagodas of Burma, the wonderful architecture of the sacred Indian cities, snake-stories, and the teak yards at Rangoon. All these things are, no doubt, what any observant traveller would describe to his family at home ; but part of a letter of a more individual character written to his youngest boy, not quite five years old, from Bombay, may serve as his farewell to India :

“ I was very pleased to get your letter all written quite by yourself. You ask me when I am coming home again. I hope to come soon after the swallows do. At present they are still flying about here, but soon many of them will be leaving these hot countries for England, and about the time they arrive in England I expect to be starting for England again. But you see it takes a long time to go round the world, and my journey home through China and Japan and America is much longer than theirs. Besides, I have not wings, and cannot fly by day or night. So you must not expect me to get back as quickly as the swallows.”

CHAPTER V

CHINA

1894

AFTER resting for a week with friends in the Nilgiri Hills, J. G. Alexander visited Ceylon, and then proceeded to China. He looked forward to this part of his journey as likely to be of much greater value to the anti-opium cause than the time spent with the Commission in India.

As evidence of the devotion with which he threw himself into whatever he did, it may be worth recording that, in the course of the voyage from Ceylon to China, he wrote home of the possibility of ultimately settling with his wife and family in some healthy part of Ceylon from which he might be better able to carry on his work. Or, again, he felt it might be right, if the Chinese Government showed any readiness to carry out a mutual scheme with the British Government for the suppression of the opium traffic, to offer them his services in carrying it out. Happily, from the point of view of family comfort, he did not find any such readiness on the part of the Chinese Government, and the dirt of Peking convinced him that he could never transport his family to such a city. After this his mind reverted to the possibility of running a newspaper of high ideals from Allahabad. None of these schemes came to

anything ; but each in turn was to him more than an idle speculation ; he would have been prepared to go through with them if the need had seemed urgent.

At Singapore, J. G. Alexander obtained interesting information of the way in which evidence had been prepared in the Straits Settlements for the Opium Commission. The Colonial Government, just like the Indian Government, resorted to every possible device to make the evidence favourable to the maintenance of the opium revenue. It even went so far as to obtain alterations in the abstracts first sent in, so as to make them more favourable to its case. " Never, surely, was a Royal Commission more bamboozled and hoodwinked at every turn. But what can you expect of men who have no fear of God before their eyes, when it is a question of preserving so big a revenue ? " Some of the officers of the Chinese men-of-war at Penang thought the only hope of their country's salvation from opium lay in education. " I fear that is altogether a delusive hope, but I was glad to hear they feel so strongly on the subject."

A young Japanese merchant on board the ship between Singapore and Hongkong told him of the great efforts the Japanese were making to keep their country free from opium smoking. " Yet Anglo-Indian officials would have us believe it is a blessing to the Chinese ! Surely their near neighbours in Japan are likely to know best."

Another passenger was an English Colonel, Commissioner of Maulman, who had spent over thirty years in Burma. " His report does not

appear in the Blue Book furnished to the Commission, though he tells me he made one on the new regulations. He is very strong as to the evil effects of opium on Burmans, and against the exclusion of non-Burmans from the register. He says that if the Indians and Chinese can't do without opium they had better stay away altogether from Burma : to allow them to have the drug free is, in his opinion, to open a wide door by which the Burmans can obtain it."

As soon as J. G. Alexander reached China, he discovered how opportune such a visit as his must be, for it showed the Chinese that there existed in England some opinion in favour of ending the opium trade ; at Hongkong he had not intended to stay, but the Rev. M. Pearce, of the London Missionary Society, and Mr. Wong, the leading anti-opiumist in Hongkong, a Chinese pastor, " put before me so strongly the desirability of my staying a few days to encourage the Christians here and at Canton in their anti-opium work, and the disappointment they would feel if I passed them by, that I felt constrained to stay."

One evening at Hongkong he visited two opium dens with Pastor Wong and his son. " The first den we went to contained about forty-three smokers ; neither den was so wretched a place as those I visited in Gya, Calcutta and Bombay, nor were the people generally so emaciated. It is to be remembered that Chinamen, at least in this part of the country, generally live well—their food is very superior to that of the same classes in India. But the answers to my questions were precisely similar to those given in

the Indian dens. I began by asking whether opium was a good thing—they all declared it was a very bad thing. Why then did they take it? To this the reply was that they began by taking it for pleasure, not intending to become slaves to the habit; now they cannot leave it off. I asked whether they could do more work with the help of opium. ‘Yes,’ they said, ‘just after we have had our smoke we can do more; but compared with those who don’t smoke at all we have not nearly so much strength.’ Would they like the Government to close all the dens and so make smoking impossible? ‘Yes, it would be a very good thing; but we should need some medicine to help us to get over the craving.’ I asked my young interpreter to thank them for their answers; they replied that it was all for their own benefit.

“One of them volunteered to show us into another den near by; here we found fifty-one smoking. They were asked, ‘Why do you come here?’ ‘Because we have acquired the habit from the example of others.’ ‘Does it do them any good?’ I needed no interpreter of the general laugh that greeted such an idea. No indeed; it does them much harm. One man just behind us bared his arm to show us how thin it had become through opium. Twenty years ago, when he began smoking, he weighed 150 lbs., now only 100. He added that they suffer much in stomach complaints and so forth, also that it greatly weakens the virile power. When the craving comes on they are quite prostrated, unable to do anything till they get their accustomed smoke.

“ Would they like the dens closed ? ‘ Yes, it would be a blessing to the present and future generations.’ This led me to tell of the new Burman rule, that those Burmans who are already smokers are allowed to register themselves, and to obtain the needful quantity for their use, but no fresh names to be put on the register. They thought this would be very good ; if it were adopted, opium smoking would die out in about fifty years.”

One of the greatest abuses at Hongkong was connected with the opium “ farm ” or monopoly, established by the British Government. The farmer had the right to search everyone passing from the Chinese mainland to Hongkong, and penalties were inflicted for smuggling. J. G. Alexander gives an instance of what this led to. “ Some time since about 200 graduates from southern China transhipped at Hongkong, on their way to the examination at Peking. They were searched by the opium farmer’s men on landing ; and six of them were found to have a small quantity of opium on their persons—they probably knew nothing of its being a contraband article here, and had only brought it for their own personal use. They were brought before the magistrate, fined fifty dollars each, and two of them, having no more money left, were obliged to return home instead of proceeding to Peking.”

At Shanghai, in the “ foreign settlements,” controlled by a municipal council, elected by property-owners—*i.e.*, Europeans and Americans—the worst abuses occurred. “ It is in these foreign settlements

that the great opium saloons are to be found ; in the native city, where they are contrary to Chinese law, they are small and obscure, and I am assured that such a flaunting of vice—both as regards opium and the kindred vice of debauchery—as we witnessed last night would not be allowed for a day in the Chinese city. Here, however, the opium dens are licensed by the municipality, a fee of twenty-five cents per lamp per month being levied, the revenue from this source for 1893 having been 34,000 taels, say £5,000 sterling. We found the opium saloons which we visited, thronged, and a feature that painfully struck me was the great preponderance of young men. Shanghai, being the principal centre of foreign commerce with China, attracts great numbers of young men, as it affords special facilities for business enterprise. These young men are tempted to spend their evenings in these places, where parties of two, three or four may be seen together, joining at the opium pipe, talking over their business or their pleasure, and being sucked into the vortex of this fascinating habit. The four places we visited have each 300 to 500 or 600 frequenters daily, as we were informed by the employees. . . We were told that there were over a hundred large places, but that large and small together there would be from three to four thousand. On enquiry at the Municipal Offices this morning we learn that about 1200 licences are in force at present ; but that there are great numbers of lodging houses and brothels for which no licences are paid, though opium smoking is carried on in them." Here, as elsewhere, many of the

smokers declared that they would gladly give up the habit if some medicine could be found to cure them of their craving. "At one of the dens the employee to whom we spoke, said that opium was introduced by the foreigners, who were thus seducing the Chinese. And Dr. Muirhead tells me that respectable Chinese not infrequently refuse to let their sons come to the foreign settlements, notwithstanding the attractions of speedy money-making, lest they should fall victims to the vices of opium and sensuality which are here so temptingly displayed for them under the ægis of foreign rule." Who can wonder at the reluctance of the Chinese to allow the influence of western civilisation to spread through their land, or that they should be suspicious of the motives of an English traveller?

At Hongkong, Canton and almost every city he visited in China, J. G. Alexander had opportunities of explaining to large audiences of Chinese the purpose of the Anti-Opium Society, and his own purpose in visiting China. And as time went on he was able to persuade even the officials of his sincerity. As he went from place to place and conferred with missionaries and with Chinese leaders, he was confirmed in the impression that the right policy to work for was a gradual, concurrent suppression of poppy culture in China, and of the trade from India, covering perhaps ten years; and his main purpose was to get authoritative expressions of Chinese opinion in favour of such a policy. He could then return to England armed with an irresistible argument for insisting on the British Government carrying out its

part of the transaction. China would have proved her desire to get rid of the habit, and there could then be no further excuse for forcing Indian opium upon her.

In Shanghai, J. G. Alexander had an interesting interview with Mr. Wong, the editor of the first Chinese unofficial newspaper, the *Shên Pao*, as well as with two leading Chinese merchants. The *Shên Pao*, which was already becoming influential, and from which other papers took their cue, had published an article dismissing the Opium Commission as almost worthless. Mr. Wong thought English public opinion could not prevail against the Indian Government and the merchants, but after conversation he offered to write an article explaining the attitude and policy of the Anti-Opium Society.

From Shanghai, J. G. Alexander travelled up the Yang-tse to Hankow. At Shanghai he had had a useful interview with the Ambassador-elect who was just leaving for Paris and London—His Excellency Kung. At Hankow he was able to get into touch with one of the greatest Chinese, Chang Chih-Tung, at that time Viceroy of Hu-peh and Hu-nan, a man "notorious for his anti-foreign feeling, and generally believed by the missionaries to be the real instigator of the anti-foreign riots of the last two or three years," which had led to the murder of several missionaries.

One of the missionaries at Hankow was able to arrange for an interview with the Viceroy's usual intermediary with foreigners, Tsai Sih-Yung, Tao-tai (chief magistrate) of Wu-chang. He received J. G. Alexander, together with three missionaries, one of

them Dr. Griffith John, "the Nestor of Chinese missionaries," in a building connected with the great cotton mills outside Wu-chang, which Chang Chih-Tung had established.

"After some conversation of a general character as to the opium habit, we got at last to the object of my visit. I explained the objects of our Society, the work it had been trying to do, and how we especially need, at the present time, a definite statement from the statesmen of China as to the steps they would take on their side to deal with the poppy growth and opium consumption if our Government undertook to stop the poppy cultivation in India, and the export of opium to China. I read to him the Tsung-li-Yamên's despatch of 1869, pointing out that the idea of concurrent action had emanated in the first instance from that body, and urged my wish to have an interview, in order to be able to take back an assurance of his (Chang Chih-Tung's) sympathy and support. Dr. John pointed out to him that, though only an individual, I was the representative of a large body of people in England equally earnest in the desire to help China to put down this evil. He also feelingly referred to the vast increase of the opium vice in China which had occurred under his own eyes during the forty years of his residence in the country, and expressed his conviction that if it should go on increasing at the same ratio for another thirty years, China would be nothing but a nation of imbeciles. To this remark Mr. Tsai appeared heartily to assent. Dr. John urged that a great opportunity was now before the rulers of China

which it behoved them to avail themselves of, before it became too late to avert the ruin of their country.

“ During the first part of our conversation, which lasted fully an hour, the Tao-tai seemed somewhat indifferent. Later on, however, he was evidently touched, and realised we were sincere. He frankly told us, near the close, that he had supposed (from a letter I had written him beforehand, briefly explaining my mission) that we wanted China to begin giving up the poppy cultivation, in order that the Indian revenue might be improved—just the inveterate Chinese suspicion of foreigners. I pointed out to him that I by no means represented the British Government ; on the contrary I represented those who had been and were fighting the Government for years, to induce them to give up this trade ; and I assured him that we did not want China to begin ; India ought to begin, and all we wanted was some guarantee that China would follow suit. He said he now understood the matter in quite a different light ; he would represent to the Viceroy what we had put before him, and would let me know next morning whether His Excellency could see me.”

The next day brought the following letter :

“ Dear Mr. Alexander,

“ Referring to our conversation about the opium question I have at once submitted to H.E. the Viceroy your wish to see him. His Excellency would be glad to see you if you could stay a few days longer here, as his time for the next few days is entirely occupied by previous engagements. I have laid your views before His Excellency and am in a position to state that H.E. generally agrees with the views of the Anti-Opium Society. He thinks it a benefit for his fellow-countrymen if the use of opium

could be restricted or abolished, and is of opinion that the prohibition of producing opium in India would go a long way towards the beneficial aim.

"His Excellency is, of course, not in a position to give an authoritative opinion on the steps China might afterwards take in the same direction, but his advice if asked for will certainly be in favour of the ends your Society is pursuing, and which you have so ably explained to me.

"I am, dear Mr. Alexander,

"Yours faithfully,

"(signed) Tsai Sih-Yung."

"Of course," comments J. G. Alexander, "the first two sentences are merely a polite refusal to see me—probably dictated by the Viceroy's dislike to all foreigners, which he was not able to overcome even in the case of one whose objects he sympathised with. The all-important sentence is the last, containing a definite pledge that if his advice is asked—that is, by the Chinese Government, according to its usual practice of consulting the chief officers of State—he will support the plan which I explained to Mr. Tsai, namely, for a concurrent reduction of poppy culture year by year by both Governments over a period of, say, ten years."

Writing to his wife on the following day (26th April) J. G. Alexander gives free expression to his great joy at having obtained this important promise. "How I wish you could have been with us last evening at the weekly missionary prayer-meeting—not to hear me, but to hear Dr. John's closing words, which belonged to you more than to myself. He stated that the Viceroy, Chang Chih-Tung, had done what he (Dr. John) had never expected he would do—he had hoped he might grant me an

interview, but he never expected he would pledge himself in writing to support our proposal. And then Dr. John proceeded to assure me that my visit to Hankow had not been in vain. It had made a deep impression on the native Christians, who had been greatly touched by my leaving wife and children for the sake of their countrymen,—‘and I can assure you that the name of A-li-shan-ta will often be mentioned in the prayers of these Christians and your journey to Peking.’ ”

He visited Nanking on his way back to Shanghai, and then, after a busy couple of days, hurried north to Tientsin *via* Chefoo, hoping to obtain an interview with Li Hung-Chang before his triennial tour round the naval fortifications of the gulf of Pe-chih-li. But he just missed him, so proceeded to Peking where he sent a carefully prepared statement on the opium situation to the Tsung-li-Yamên (Council of Ministers). The Tsung-li-Yamên expressed its willingness to see him, but the statement had to be translated into Chinese, and then they needed time to consider it. During the fortnight thus occupied there was time, not only for meetings in Peking, but for a visit to the Great Wall of China and the Ming Tombs. “It was a most enjoyable excursion, the Nanko Pass, through which one reaches the Great Wall, being very beautiful for scenery, whilst the invigorating air of the mountains and the pleasant society of Mr. Roberts [a missionary returning to his country station] contributed to render the first three days extremely agreeable. The last day’s long journey home, with only the

company of the carter and the servant kindly lent me by Prof. Oliver, was not equally enjoyable." In fact J. G. Alexander now for the first time experienced the discomforts of Chinese travel, which were almost too much for him in West China thirteen years later.

In Peking and the province of Chih-li generally, he found much less opium-smoking than in the south, or at Nanking and Foochow, partly because the people were generally poorer. But in the mountainous north-west, continuing from the mountains of north Shan-si, notorious for opium-smoking, the habit was reported to prevail extensively.

Whilst he was waiting at Peking news came of the imprisonment of a missionary at Bombay "on the ground of his having, in a careful statement, fully supported by evidence, asked for an investigation into the action of the Bombay Opium Department with regard to opium dens. I cannot doubt that it will have caused intense indignation at home and nothing, in my opinion, could more clearly illustrate the Indian administration's methods in regard to excise questions than so monstrously unjust a sentence."

Sir Robert Hart, who saw the statement prepared for the Tsung-li-Yamên, was of opinion that they would give " 'an equally clear reply'—meaning one in harmony with our wishes." At last, on 2nd June, J. G. Alexander was received by one of the ministers, H. E. Chang, but the interview was disappointing, for "I failed to get any explicit assurance on the question of the native growth of the poppy, or any

clear response whatever to the proposal put forward in my statement. This is easily explicable by the fact that a single minister would not be likely to commit his colleagues and the Government as a whole. Li Hung-Chang occupies a freer position and is himself a stronger man, and I shall probably get more out of him. But the fact that the Tsung-li-Yamên has received me, and that its spokesman has distinctly given me to understand that the Chinese Government stands where it always did in its objection to the trade, are of the greatest importance."

So back he started again for Tientsin—excited with the thought that his face was at last set towards home. On the 8th he had a satisfactory talk with Lo Feng-Lo, Li Hung-Chang's Secretary for Foreign affairs, and three days later interviewed the great man himself. "Li Hung-Chang asked if I was a clergyman (or missionary) and the same as to Sir Joseph Pease: he wound up in a very complimentary manner, saying that I was a philanthropist, etc. My plan of gradual and concurrent suppression is quite knocked on the head; the Chinese statesmen all asked for stoppage of the import from India, and Li Hung-Chang more strongly than the others. He had no hesitation about giving the assurance that China will stop the home growth, when the import is stopped, saying: 'You may be sure that if you cease sending our people poison, we shall prevent them from providing themselves with it.' I feel that this is far better than my own proposal, and that God has given me much more than I asked or thought."

No doubt it would have been better, from the point of view of justice, that Britain should have stopped the trade first ; for even if the Chinese had wished to poison themselves it was no business of Britain or the Indian Government to grow rich on the vices of another nation. But governments do not often rise to ideal politics ; it is sometimes hardly possible for them to do so ; and it is always desirable to let them down as easily as possible, even if some abstract conception of justice is not wholly satisfied. Actually, the attitude of Li Hung-Chang and the other Chinese ministers, though wholly justified, meant another dozen years of opium trade and poppy culture and poison, until, with John Morley at the India Office, a wiser Chinese Government perceived that its time had come, and proposed the very solution that J. G. Alexander had unsuccessfully pressed upon them years before. The philanthropist proved himself a wiser statesman—if the good of the people is to be regarded as the true aim of statesmanship—than a man who is sometimes regarded as the greatest statesman of his day.

Of the rest of his journey little need be said. His visit to Japan was confined to a few hours with his cousin, Mary Ann Gundry, in Tokyo, as quarantine restrictions kept the passengers on board the *Empress of China* at Yokohama. But at least he saw Fujiyama, and the after-effects of one of Tokyo's severer earthquakes, and got many letters from home. At the beginning of July he reached Vancouver. Here he saw the outside of the Chinese opium dens—his

guide thought it unsafe to enter—and he got particulars of the opium-smuggling that was going on *via* British Columbia into California. With fellow-travellers from China he went a drive round the Stanley Park; they also spent a day at Glacier House in the Rockies. In crossing the Rockies the train was three times delayed: first the line was being repaired where a rock had fallen; then the train had to make three attempts before it could get up an incline on a curve; and before they left the Kicking-Horse Canyon the same thing happened again. But after four nights in the train Winnipeg was safely reached. In Eastern America, J. G. Alexander broke the journey at Toronto, Philadelphia and New York, where he did some useful anti-opium work, and from Toronto he visited Niagara Falls.

Before the end of July, 1894, he was home.

CHAPTER VI

FRANCE

1887-1914

IN later life, principally after he had ceased to practise as a barrister, J. G. Alexander undertook various "missionary travels" in France. He visited almost every part of France at one time or another, also the Vaudois valleys in North Italy, Belgium and French-speaking Switzerland. These journeys were undertaken as concerns for the religious welfare of the French people. It was his wish to contribute to the strengthening of the Protestant religion in France, by assisting to publish the truths of Christianity. He felt that the need of the people was a closer personal knowledge of the Bible, especially of the Gospel story; and he distributed great numbers of Gospels, not only at meetings, but whenever he found an opportunity in town or country.

Before setting out on these journeys he would, after the manner of Friends, lay his concern before the fellow-members of his district, assembled in their Monthly Meeting, and if they approved it, the "concern" would go forward to the larger group, the Quarterly Meeting, for confirmation, and after that, if the service lay outside the British Islands, to the Morning Meeting, the name given to a gathering of the Ministers and Elders of the

Society that met every six weeks. Later, this meeting was dropped, and personal "concerns" for service abroad were considered by the Yearly Meeting itself or by the central executive of the Society, the "Meeting for Sufferings." The Meeting that liberated him for such service would keep in touch with him through one or two of their number appointed as correspondents, and would also bear the expenses necessarily incurred on the journey.

In France, J. G. Alexander worked in co-operation with the various Protestant churches. He was on intimate terms with some of the most active leaders in Paris and other parts of the country. His message was not primarily concerned with the special practical applications of Christianity, which distinguish Quakerism; he was always eager and ready to state his own conviction that the Quaker emphasis on individual guidance and responsibility, on freedom of worship and on the unlawfulness of all war, was essential to true Christianity, but his concern was that people should learn to follow Christ and that they should study and love the New Testament; he believed that if they honestly tried to apply the teaching of Christ to their own lives they would, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, be led to these and other applications of Christian teaching to life. On two or three missionary journeys through France, undertaken by J. G. Alexander soon after his marriage he was accompanied by his wife, who thus entered fully into his work and joined in the intimate friendships he had formed.

One of the journeys of this period had a different object. A crisis took place in the relations of France and Germany in 1887: following the militarist agitation of General Boulanger, a French police officer, Schnaebeler, was illegally arrested on 21st April, by a German police officer, Gauthier, on French territory. Bismarck released Schnaebeler six days later and the motive for the outrage remains obscure.

President Grévy refused to get excited, and the incident was soon closed. But French anger had been aroused, and did not quickly cool down. The incident aggravated a general sense of international unrest and suspicion.

In the midst of this crisis an English Friend, Anne Warner Marsh, and her husband, T. W. Marsh, felt it laid upon them to visit some of the leading European statesmen and urge upon them the preservation of peace as the duty of Christian statesmanship. Jane Miller of Edinburgh and J. G. Alexander accompanied them. It does not appear that the deputation met with any very cordial response. J. G. Alexander's chief part was, naturally, in Paris, where an interview was obtained with President Grévy through M. de Pressensé, a leading French Protestant and Senator, and M. Frédéric Passy, one of the finest French pacifists, both of whom were known to J. G. Alexander. The deputation was also greatly assisted and encouraged by Mme. Dalencourt, Dr. McAll, M. Krüger and others of J. G. Alexander's old French friends and colleagues.

On the 26th October, the President received them, heard what Anne Warner Marsh had to say, and assured her " that no one could be more opposed to war, or in favour of peace than he was, and that she need not enlarge on that subject. France would never take up arms except for the defence of her honour, her interests, or her liberty, if these were attacked." These were, of course, assurances that any statesmen would be bound to make at any time ; and seeing that the President had to resign a few weeks later, the interview did not appear to have been fruitful. A few days later, J. G. Alexander had a much fuller talk with the French Foreign Minister, M. Flourens, quite a young man, with enlightened ideas of international relations. He wrote of this interview, " I thought it right to avail myself of the opportunity of speaking to him about some of the subjects relating to peace on which I had already had conversations with numerous Frenchmen. After going into the question of Alsace-Lorraine, and receiving his assurance that France had no intention of going to war on that account, I ventured to express to him the thanks of us in England for all that he had done in the interests of peace during the last few months. He told me that the maintenance of peace had been and would be the one great object of his efforts. I concluded by saying that we should not forget to pray that God would assist him in the arduous post which he filled ; and he expressed himself grateful."

It was impossible to obtain an interview with

the German Crown Prince Frederick, then at San Remo, already too ill to see them, nor with Bismarck, or any other German statesman. The party proceeded to Russia, but J. G. Alexander had to leave it in Germany on account of his health.

Peaceful counsels happily prevailed. The Quaker Mission may not have had much to do with this ; but in other directions it had its value : the visit of the Friends was an encouragement and stimulus to the little band of Christian workers in Paris, to the small Quaker community at Minden, and to others who were trying to hold fast to the truth among difficult surroundings. After this, for ten years, J. G. Alexander scarcely set foot in France.

In 1896, having given up his practice at the Bar, he and his family left Croydon and settled at Tunbridge Wells. His membership in the Society of Friends was thus transferred to Lewes and Chichester Monthly Meeting, and it was this Monthly Meeting that acknowledged him as a "minister" and gave him minutes of liberation and steady support and sympathy for his frequent journeys in France.

The first journey was undertaken in the autumn of 1897. Charles D. Terrell, his companion on various subsequent occasions, joined him in holding meetings at a number of McAll mission stations. They started their tour in Brittany, and visited many towns in western and southern France, holding a meeting or travelling on to a fresh town, or both, daily. Some of their meetings took the form

of lantern lectures of Eastern life. Charles Terrell had recently been obliged to leave India, where he had been as a missionary for some years, and it was only three years since J. G. Alexander's journey with the opium commission. Both were glad to have opportunities of urging the claims of non-Christian countries upon the goodwill and influence of the Christian people of Europe. It was their experience, as J. G. Alexander expressed it, that "the French people are so exceedingly quick of perception that they will often better take in the truths of the Gospel if administered in small doses and in indirect fashion, in connection with that which interests them as adding to their store of knowledge than if it were administered to them in more substantial and direct teaching." At some towns, audiences of several hundreds attended these lectures, and the travellers had to show discretion in what they said in order to avoid conflict with the Catholics. In this they were successful, and J. G. Alexander wrote after his return to England, "That two Englishmen should have been able to hold such a series of meetings, without let or hindrance, whilst the anti-Jewish leader, Drumont, was denouncing all Englishmen and Protestants as enemies of France in his widely circulated paper, *La Libre Parole*, seems to me now very wonderful. The Lord was surely guiding us. Yet it must also be said that, ready as is the Frenchman to look upon the Englishman at large as his natural enemy, when it comes to dealing with a particular Englishman who is reasonably considerate towards his

national idiosyncrasies and especially with one who is obviously seeking to do him good without any selfish motive, his prejudices quickly melt away, and his native courtesy shines out." In reporting on this journey J. G. Alexander had to tell his Monthly Meeting of the regret with which he noticed the lack of energy of French Protestants. On the other hand he found hopeful signs in the activity of groups of students of the *Unions Cadettes* at Rochefort and Montauban. In all his journeys he did what he could to draw the various Protestant sects in France to work in closer unity for the uplift of their fellow-countrymen.

In 1898, J. G. Alexander was for a short time in Paris on his way to a Peace Congress at Turin. He met there a Protestant pastor, who had formerly been a Roman Catholic priest, but had found himself unable to continue in the Church of Rome. In this way, J. G. Alexander first came into close contact with a movement in France away from the authority of the Roman Church towards freedom of religion which claimed much sympathy and attention from him in later years, when it was developing into a stronger and more positive force in French life.

It would be a mistake, however, to think of his work in France as anti-Catholic. Owing to his intense belief in the value of the "open Bible," as the greatest of all external aids to good for rich and poor, simple and cultured alike, he necessarily found himself in opposition to that type of priestcraft which attempts to keep the people in ignorance

and to feed it on superstition. But he always rejoiced when he was able to join with French Catholics in temperance meetings or other good works in which he and they could unite.

After the Turin Peace Congress he paid some further visits in south and south-west France, and at the end of the year he and his wife and two younger sons went to Arcachon for the winter. They left England at a moment when the difference between the British and French Governments with regard to Fashoda was acute. War between the two countries was as near, perhaps, as it has ever been since 1815. Many people were quite sure that war was sooner or later inevitable. Happily the French Government was able to resist the pressure of the militarists : it was strong enough to give way.

The residence at Arcachon during the winter of 1898-9 was undertaken largely on account of the health of J. G. Alexander's youngest son ; but Arcachon was chosen, not only for its soft sea breezes and dry pine-growing soil, but also because J. G. Alexander felt specially called to help in reviving Protestant and evangelical activity in Bordeaux. The Y.M.C.A. and McAll Mission had both at one time flourished and then subsided in Bordeaux ; and the Protestant population of the fourth city of France was little more than 8,000, divided between the Eglise Réformée and the Eglise Libre. Work that was supposed to be carried on had lapsed ; and one or two zealous pastors were left to struggle unaided against the

apathy and disunion of their congregations and colleagues. J. G. Alexander helped to bring all the pastors of the district together for a week of meetings on various aspects of the Christian faith and life ; the meetings were not very large ; the apathetic could not be attracted ; but those who had some faith were strengthened, and those who had been divided brought together. Although J. G. Alexander did not in any way put himself forward as leader of the discussions he felt the burden of the effort very heavily upon him, and had hoped for another English visitor as companion. More than one name was proposed, including a man of higher social distinction who had visited Bordeaux a little time before ; but the sense of strain between England and France was not yet over, and these other visitors were rejected by the local pastors as "too English." Probably that accusation was never brought against J. G. Alexander himself. In appealing to his fellow-countrymen to recognise the needs of France he wrote, "France claims, first of all, our sympathy. Let us think of her needs, study her needs, till we realise these needs, and *feel with* her—that is what 'sympathy' means." He himself felt with France. He served the French people, not in any condescending spirit, but because he loved and respected them.

During the winter he also visited a few towns in the west and south of France, the former with C. D. Terrell, the latter with his brother S. J. Alexander ; from one place he writes that for the

first time he has been asked to preach from a Protestant pulpit, and contrasts this with the readiness with which pulpits had been opened to him in his tours through France in his student days. In the south, some time was spent by the brothers at Nîmes and Congénies in the Gard where the remnant of French Quakerism still existed. They visited some of the villages round about on bicycles ; J. G. Alexander had been making a valiant attempt to learn to ride a bicycle, but this was the only time his bicycle was of any value to him. He could not learn the art. He had not been brought up either to understand machines or to be their slave ; he preferred to ride on horseback. The other machine on which he depended, on this and other journeys, was a lantern, and it treated him as badly as the bicycle. It seems to have left the audience in utter darkness once at least on nearly every journey, and the lecturer had to improvise until the lantern recovered and the next picture of Eastern life appeared. The audience always remained patient and quiet.

A series of meetings was held during this winter at Arcachon, where J. G. Alexander took the leading part. They were chiefly attended by rowdy youths. At the neighbouring port of La Teste, the only building procurable for a meeting was a theatre ; and one of the conditions of having the theatre for this purpose was that there should be a ten minutes' interval so that those who attended might go and get a drink at the adjoining public house, in which the owner of the theatre was interested.

A crowd of fishermen and women attended; a few went out at half-time and did not return; the rest were too much absorbed in asking questions to go for a drink.

In the summer of 1899, J. G. Alexander spent some time in the Yonne and adjoining departments, and during the following autumn and winter he was again in the south and west of France, his wife accompanying him for part of this journey. They visited the colony of Friends in the Gard and left their eldest son to spend the winter in the household of Mme. Marie Bernard, now (1920) the only Friend left at Congénies. At a remarkable meeting at Bordeaux, J. G. Alexander was able to see some fruits of the labours of the previous two years. Then he worked for a time round La Rochelle, where his friend, C. D. Terrell, had settled with his family.

During 1898-9 each visit to Paris had been saddened by the mortal and painful illness, borne with great patience and courage, with which Hermann Krüger had been stricken. In 1900 death came to release the sufferer, and J. G. Alexander was to see the dearest of all his friends no more.

During the Paris Exhibition of 1900, meetings were held almost daily under the joint auspices of various Friends, the McAll Mission and the French Eglise Réformée. J. G. Alexander was almost entirely responsible for the organisation of this work, but, owing to his English nationality, he did not feel it right to take much vocal part. One side of the work he described in a letter to one of his sons

at school: "There is in each window of the little Bible dépôt, a glass case with Bibles, or rather New Testaments; one is headed: *Langues d'Europe et des Colonies Françaises*, and the other: *Langues Classiques et Orientales*. The European case has a big French Bible open in the middle; they are mostly open at the Sermon on the Mount . . . In the Eastern languages, where you generally begin to read at the opposite end, it took me some time to find out where the chapters came, so as to fix on the fifth chapter of Matthew for the open page." It was typical of him that all his Bibles should be New Testaments, and open at the Sermon on the Mount.

In November and December, 1900, he again visited the Gard, Montauban, Bordeaux, La Rochelle and other places, and was glad, after the restrictions of the summer's work, to be able once more to speak freely to the people who attended his meetings. At Bioulle, addressing some thirty or forty students, he compared "the state of things observed among French Protestants during the past three years with that of twenty-five years ago." He told them he "noticed that while there had been great development and progress in many respects, there had been none, rather retrogression, as regards lay activity. I reminded them that the man who knows how to call out the activity of others is a better worker than he who does a great deal of work himself, and commended the question to their serious attention." At another meeting, by way of illustrating the possibility and helpfulness of

Christians of different persuasions uniting together he took occasion in a friendly way to express his disagreement with a previous speaker who had upheld the military life as being in accord with Christian teaching. In such ways as these J. G. Alexander's Quakerism was constantly influencing his evangelistic work. He crossed to England again a week before Christmas, the sixteenth crossing he had made during the year, and the only one that brought him sea-sickness.

In the spring of 1901, he extended his "parish" to include Belgium. One of his shorter visits of the previous year had been to the mining district of north-east France, and his first week in Belgium was spent in Charleroi and the mining villages round it. This, it should be noted, was during the Boer War; the influence of this circumstance, and his general method of work, are illustrated by the following passages from a journal letter:—"I have a 'lecture' each evening. Yesterday at Charleroi itself, in the 'temple'; to-day at Fontaine l'Evêque, . . . to-morrow and Wednesday, at a place called Gilly, Thursday and Friday, at Ronsart. My second 'lecture' ('conférence,' in French) on Wednesday and Friday nights is entitled 'War against War,' the first being my 'Journey round the World,' with slides."

Of the first lecture he says, "To their great pleasure [that is, the pleasure of the local Protestant pastors and other organisers of the lectures] a large proportion of the audience on this occasion

consisted of a class they do not often reach, the town bourgeoisie, attracted by bills announcing my lecture, and though a few left early not liking the religious tone of the lecture, but without making a disturbance, the great majority stayed. . . ."

The next day he continues, "Yesterday morning after breakfast we went with the young pastor to a most interesting Bible-class at one of the miners' houses—they take turns to receive it—where about fifteen were gathered. It was delightful to see how well some of them knew their Bibles and how intelligently they discussed the question. . . . At the close of the discussion of the subject, one of the men very respectfully and nicely told me there was a matter which had puzzled them, how it came to pass that two Christian and Protestant peoples [Britons and Boers] were engaged in war, a great country going to war for the sake of money, trying to take away the independence of a little one, and they would like to know my explanation of it. I replied with an expression of my grief at the war, and at my country's part in it, but explaining that though the grasping capitalists who got up the war doubtless did so for the sake of gold, they had contrived to disguise this from the people by putting the Boers into a position in which they found themselves obliged to take the initiative if they were not to see themselves crushed by the preparations made for this purpose, and that thus the great mass of our people had been made to believe that they were simply resisting an invasion of British territory. Then I went on to

explain Friends' views against all war as being opposed to the precepts of the gospel. They seemed satisfied ; I learnt afterwards that a man was there, who has only been attending Protestant services for a few weeks, and who said when invited that he would not come to meet an Englishman ; if he met with one he should kill him ! I expect it was chiefly on his account that the question was put to me."

A Charleroi paper reported the first lecture in a very friendly fashion, under the title, "Un quaker à Charleroi," and printed a further article explaining what Quakerism was.

Meetings were also held, and lectures given, at Liège, Namur, Brussels, Mons and smaller places.

Towards the end of the same year, 1901, accompanied by his brother Samuel, J. G. Alexander visited the Vaudois valleys. These Protestant descendants of the ancient Waldenses, famous to Englishmen for the diplomatic and poetic intervention of Cromwell and Milton against the persecuting Duke of Savoy, had been visited at various times by leading members of the Society of Friends. At one period in their history all their native Italian pastors had died, owing to their devotion in attending plague-stricken parishioners, and French-speaking pastors had come from Switzerland to fill the vacant places. Instead of the pastors learning Italian the Vaudois learnt French, and thus became bi-lingual—or even tri-lingual, for their patois is certainly neither Italian nor French. This has been a great boon to them ; for, the valleys

being too poor to support a growing population, many have to emigrate. It was also a great boon to J. G. Alexander, who could only address them in French.

The two brothers spent nearly three weeks, visiting the sixteen Vaudois parishes, including almost all the remote mountain villages of the Pellice and adjacent valleys. S. J. Alexander lectured on Palestine, Joseph lectured on India and China and spoke on peace, and they crossed mountain-passes or climbed by steep mule-tracks to participate in religious meetings and services.

J. G. Alexander wrote in his journal letter the following account of the final meeting at Torre Pellice, at which he was alone, his brother having stayed in the mountains to visit two of the remoter villages :—" This seemed the right occasion for giving the special message for the Vaudois churches, speaking, as I had already done at Villar, from the three verses, Acts viii. 1, 4, and ix. 19, which tell of the dispersion of the Church at Jerusalem, except the apostles, and how they spread the word everywhere. Though no longer dispersed by persecution as were their forefathers, the Vaudois are scattered by the need of a livelihood, which their valleys cannot furnish to their increasing population, and so they go out into Italy, France, South America (Argentine and Uruguay), and all over the world. At Villar, eleven young persons were present who were shortly going forth, five to New York, two to Paris, etc. I could not but see in this the design of Providence to make them a

missionary people ; but for this they must maintain in the home and in their favoured valleys an intense spiritual life ; and that life is only to be found in drawing near, ever afresh, to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. I spoke, too, of the universal priesthood of believers, of our having no pastors among Friends, and how all are called to take part in one way or another in this great work. . . . M. Pons, the Moderator, of whose presence I was not aware while speaking, came up from the bottom of the meeting to express their thankfulness for our visit, which he did in his usual happy way. . . . He wished me to convey to my brother, Samuel, their regret at not seeing him again . . . and added : ‘ If you would stay another three weeks in our valleys, you would have very large meetings [most of them had, in fact, been quite full]. Our people don’t take to strangers all at once—they have seen so many. They are like the pigeons in the great square at St. Mark’s, at Venice—they pay no heed to the bulk of the passengers who come and go. But let a little English maiden come with a paper full of crumbs for them, and you will see them come down in flocks around her—they know those who bring them food ! ’ ”

The brothers spent a few days visiting McAll Mission Stations on the Riviera, then travelled by way of the Friends at Congénies to the Ardèche, one of the departments of the old Protestant stronghold of the Cevennes, which was a new district for J. G. Alexander. Here, as in some other places, the anti-English feeling aroused by the Boer war

caused a certain coldness on the part of some of the pastors, but this was soon thawed by personal intercourse, and though one or two proposals for meetings had been refused, when the travellers arrived, people were speedily called together, and showed friendliness and interest in the messages given to them.

At Roanne, an industrial centre on the Upper Loire, J. G. Alexander spoke at one of a series of meetings that were being held amongst Socialistic workmen:—"We were listened to by about sixty people, mostly of a very rough class. I felt it best to tell them plainly that I was an Englishman, though an Englishman who detested war, and in particular the present war, and spoke to them of the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, having previously asked M. Delattre [the pastor] to read Matthew v. They listened to me very quietly and well, and afterwards to M. Delattre, but when the latter closed with a short prayer some of them kept up a continuous talking, that being evidently more than they were prepared to stand."

In 1902 J. G. Alexander undertook two further journeys in completion—for the time being at least—of his special service for France entered upon in 1897. The first journey included visits to La Rochelle, Montauban and Lyons in February and early March; from Lyons J. G. Alexander, accompanied by his wife, entered Switzerland, and visited Geneva and Lausanne, where he met theological students, and other parts of the French-speaking Protestant canton of Vaud. A number

of meetings were held, at some of which J. G. Alexander expounded Quaker peace principles, whilst at others he spoke of his travels in various lands and their need of Christian influence, but especially of the needs of France, and of certain great cities, Bordeaux, Toulouse and Lyons, where there was little open preaching of Christianity. It was his great wish to stir up the French-speaking Protestant strongholds, such as the Vaudois and the Genevese, to a sense of their duty to France. During this journey, both in France and Switzerland, he came into touch with some conscientious objectors to military service. A Frenchman, whose parents he visited at Chartres, had undergone six years' imprisonment owing to his refusal to serve.

The second journey of this year was to the north-east of France, Calais, Boulogne, Amiens, St. Quentin and the industrial area about Lille. Having lived most of his life in country-towns or capital cities, J. G. Alexander was more at home with country congregations, and with the inhabitants of great cities like Paris and Bordeaux, than with industrial workers, but he always found contact with the rank and file of the great trade-unions peculiarly attractive; the very fact that their environment and outlook was so different from his own seems to have led him to regard their strong ideas and forceful character with a special interest; and they seem to have been conscious of his respect for them, and to have returned it. Even at places where the meetings held by Protestant pastors were said to be often disturbed he was listened

to with respect or even approval. He was just as conscious as they that there was much evil in the world, and just as sincere in his desire to get rid of that evil; he approached the matter from a very different angle, or at a very different point, from theirs; but both he and they seem to have been conscious that there was much in common between their real aims. Although he was convinced that the beginning of the conquest of evil must be in the hearts of individuals he never denied the existence of social evils, or that social evils could be largely diminished by changing the organisation of society. In fact his own record, and the record of the religious society of which he was a member, was a record of devoted service in such "crusades."

In returning the minute of liberation that had been granted by his Monthly Meeting in 1898, J. G. Alexander expressed his conviction that a great work lay before the Protestant Churches of France and Belgium. He had been conscious, he said, of the Lord going before him, making the way plain.

J. G. Alexander undertook religious visits to Scandinavia in 1903 and 1904, and in 1906-7 he re-visited China and travelled round the world a second time. He also attended International Peace Congresses in various foreign cities. Accounts of these journeys must be reserved for later chapters.

But however many other claims might seem at one time or another to be specially urgent, France was always prominent in his mind, and it is doubtful if a single year of his later life passed in which he did not set foot there.

His friend C. D. Terrell had moved from La Rochelle to Paimpol, on the northern coast of Brittany; J. G. Alexander was the mainstay of the Friends' Committee that advised him in his work, and got support for it; and he paid several visits to him, taking part in meetings held amongst the "pêcheurs d'Islande" and other Breton folk.

In the spring of 1906, he travelled rather more extensively again, accompanied by his eldest son. Starting at Paimpol they passed through Brittany and down the west of France, addressing meetings at some twenty places in the course of a month, the audiences varying from a score or two to over five hundred. This journey was undertaken partly in view of the crisis caused by the withdrawal of State aid from all the French churches, both Catholic and Protestant. Two of the three chief Protestant bodies had to some extent depended on this aid. In earlier years, J. G. Alexander had felt that this dependence did them more harm than good, and he now found this judgment confirmed, and saw that the need of meeting this financial crisis was acting as a stimulus to their energies. He also found that it was possible to have meetings in places where an Englishman could not wisely have spoken in public on religion before.

During the Franco-British Exhibition, in the summer of 1908, J. G. Alexander took a house in London, and, with the support of one or two French Protestant pastors, held a series of open-air meetings in Hyde Park in French.

A further extensive journey through France was undertaken, with the company of a French pastor, M. Allégret, in 1909.

Another matter that took him several times to Paris was his interest in French Protestant Missions, especially those in Madagascar and Basutoland. After the French conquest of Madagascar the French Protestant Churches, which had already begun to work there, sent two commissioners, of whom Hermann Krüger was one, to investigate and report on the condition of the country and its people. Their report remains one of the most illuminating documents in Malagasy history. J. G. Alexander's intimacy with M. Krüger naturally led him to pay special attention to the problems connected with mission work in Madagascar; moreover it was one of the fields of work of the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, and for sixteen years he was a member of its Madagascar committee. The work of both English and French missionary Societies was carried on under unusual difficulties, which finally came to a head when M. Augagneur was appointed Governor of the Island in 1905. M. Augagneur had two *bêtes noires*: Christianity and alcohol. He set to work to close as many churches and gin-shops as he could. He had a large measure of success. Education was restricted; missionary work limited in various other ways; the Friends' hospital near the capital, Tananarive, was seized. The missionaries and their friends in France and England did everything in their power—short of uniting with the forces of Bacchus—

to get rid of M. Augagneur. He was not an easy man to remove. J. G. Alexander, owing to his long friendship with the leading personalities of the Paris Mission House, was the natural envoy of the English missionary societies; and he paid several visits to Paris in order to confer with the Paris mission officials for the overthrow of the atheist governor. Finally, the agitation was successful. M. Augagneur returned to France in 1911; the Malagasy churches were re-opened. It is believed that the gin-shops remained closed. This was not his only service to mission work in Madagascar. He took a personal interest in each missionary of the Friends' Mission and was particularly helpful in finding French men and women to join in the work, and keeping in touch with them.

Most of the work on behalf of the Basutoland missionaries was carried on in England. It consisted largely in planning meetings in English towns to be addressed by French Basutoland missionaries home on furlough.

This is perhaps the place to refer to another missionary interest. An industrial mission started by some Friends in Pemba, the sister Island of Zanzibar off the east coast of Africa, claimed his enthusiastic support through all vicissitudes. It appealed to him specially as an effort to secure full liberty for the slaves in the Island, and to teach the freed slaves the dignity and value of labour.

Another French interest, already referred to, that absorbed a good deal of J. G. Alexander's time in the last ten years of his life, was the

movement among ex-priests towards a free Christian religion—a movement that naturally appealed to a Quaker. J. G. Alexander had often felt that French Christians, Protestant hardly less than Catholic, were too much the slaves of formality. Now he found arising in France, the work of Frenchmen themselves, a new spiritual religion such as he had often longed for. Léon Revoyre, one of the strongest personalities of this movement, editor of the *Chrétien Libre*, gives a typical account of his first contact with J. G. Alexander. He was sent by Mme. Dalencourt, and found him just preparing to leave Paris for England. “ Je ne puis me rappeler, sans émotion, mes premières impressions en face de cet homme si simple que je voyais alors pour la première fois et qui m’écouta sans apparent enthousiasme et en s’excusant de ne pouvoir le faire qu’en bouclant ses valises.

“ Peu à peu, ce véritable ami, qui, comme presque tous les quakers, faisait à la réflexion une place d’autant plus grande que la décision devait être plus ferme, se revela tel qu’il était : optimiste à froid, pieux et large, fidèle, délicat, désintéressé et dévoué comme jamais personne ne l’a été d’avantage pour notre humble mouvement.”*

* “ I cannot recall, without emotion, my first impressions in the presence of this single-minded man whom I then saw for the first time and who listened to me without apparent enthusiasm, apologising because he could only do so while finishing his packing. Little by little, this true friend, whose important decisions, like those of nearly all the Quakers, are only reached after weighty reflection, showed himself as he was : optimist at all times, pious yet broad, faithful, tender, disinterested and as devoted as anyone has ever been to our humble movement.”

Léon Revogyre goes on to speak of J. G. Alexander's work for this free Christian Movement : his unwearying correspondence, the organisation of various lecture tours in England, Scotland and Ireland, his extempore translations which were the admiration of those who knew both French and English.

It would be easy to enlarge further on this work ; but enough has been written, perhaps, to show his tireless zeal, and the variety of his interest in French life. The account of his last visits to France after the outbreak of the great war belongs to a later chapter. His oldest French friend, Justine Dalencourt, gives a better indication than any Englishman could do, of the way in which his character appealed to the French. " Dans la plupart de mes visites missionnaires en France, pendant les vacances, j'entendais parler de lui. Le nom de Joseph Alexander, tout à fait populaire dans les Eglises, faisait épanouir les visages. En effet, je crois qu'il n'y a pas eu parmi les amis chrétiens de la France, un autre Anglais qui ait aussi profondément compris le caractère français. Ce n'était pas sa parfaite connaissance de la langue qui lui ouvrait les portes, mais les sentiments délicats et confiants d'un cœur chrétien intelligent et aimant qui sait que la Créateur a mis dans chaque âme d'homme un trait de Sa ressemblance, un souffle de Sa vie imperissable, vie divine ; c'était sur ce terrain-là que Joseph essayait de bâtir ou de semer. Il n'imposait pas ses convictions par ces paroles, ces inflexions de voix ou ces allures plus

ou moins doctrinaires ou doctorales qui ne plaisait à personne, et déplaisent particulièrement aux Français quelque peu . . . chatouilleux peut-être. Il parlait, m'a-t-il toujours semblé, moins en avocat que comme un témoin qui a entendu, vu et vécu ce qu'il annonce. On sentait que le moteur de ses activités était la foi ferme et sereine qu'obéir aux lois divines est le seul moyen de vivre une vie digne du Père qui l'a donnée, et le seul chemin du bonheur pour les nations comme pour les individus."*

* "In the course of most of my missionary journeys through France, during the vacations, I heard him spoken of. Faces lit up at the name of Joseph Alexander, who was very popular in the Churches. Indeed, I believe there has not been among the Christian friends of France any other Englishman who so completely understood the French character. It was not his perfect knowledge of the language that opened the doors for him, but the tenderness and trustfulness of an understanding and Christian heart, which knows that the Creator has placed in every human soul something of His image, an imperishable seed of His divine life; it was in this ground that Joseph tried to build or to sow. He did not impose his convictions by any form of words, any inflexion of the voice, any doctrinaire or authoritative attitude which appeals to no one, and particularly annoys some Frenchmen, perhaps a little over sensitive. He spoke, it always seemed to me, less as an advocate than as a witness who has heard, seen and lived the things he declares. You felt that the motive of his actions was a firm, serene conviction that obedience to the divine laws is the one way of living a life worthy of the Father who gives life, and the only road to happiness for nations and for individuals."

CHAPTER VII

CHINA AGAIN

1906-7

THE decade that followed the report of the Opium Commission was perhaps the darkest period in the history of the Anti-Opium Society. The Indian Government had won a signal victory over the agitators ; and it took a long time for the forces of the agitators to be re-formed for a fresh attack. As soon as the report was published, in May, 1895, " Sir Joseph Pease in the House of Commons moved a resolution which would have set it aside and re-affirmed the vote of 1891. He was seconded by Mr. John E. Ellis, who brought a powerful indictment against the procedure of the Commission and of the Indian Government with regard to it. Mr. H. H. Fowler (Lord Wolverhampton), Secretary of State for India in Lord Rosebery's Government, urged that the House had not had time to study the Report, and the motion was rejected by 176 votes to 59."* Probably most members never did study it ; if they had done so they might have been impressed by H. J. Wilson's minute of dissent. But the *Times* had published a more digestible summary of the report before it was laid

* J. G. Alexander in the final (June, 1917) issue of *The Friend of China*.

before Parliament at all ; and this summary was probably what most members read. At any rate Parliament and country alike were lulled into acquiescence ; and the anti-opium campaign had to begin again.

It is hardly possible to convey any idea of the labour undertaken by J. G. Alexander and a few other faithful workers throughout those years. The pages of *The Friend of China*, of which he was editor all the time, might give anyone who cared to go through them some idea of what he meant by "eternal vigilance." Throughout the time when he was undertaking journeys in France, with all the claims of the international peace movement, of anti-slavery work, of the Society of Friends, of the education of his sons and other domestic affairs upon him, he seemed to find time to read every relevant book or paper, especially everything that was written about China, and to assimilate all that he read.

We have seen in the preceding chapter how he lectured on India and China to many audiences in various parts of France ; and these lectures included references to the degradation of the opium habit and the responsibility of those who encouraged or profited by the trade. In England, whose Government was ultimately responsible for the Indo-Chinese trade, such publicity was even more needed. *The Friend of China* was only one means of spreading information. Lectures, similar to those given in France, but with the British responsibility for the opium traffic emphasised,

provided a second and more effective method of awakening the public conscience. In 1896-7, J. G. Alexander, with the approval of his Monthly Meeting, visited all the Friends' Schools in England and Ireland, lecturing on the East, bringing before the boys and girls the evils connected with the opium traffic, and, more generally, speaking of the responsibility of Christians towards non-Christian peoples. The principle that he proclaimed was the duty of Christians to show by word and deed the reality of the gospel of love to those who were ignorant of the New Testament. The work of Christian missionaries, as he saw it, was to preach and to live out the teaching of Christ, the love of God to men and the brotherhood of all men. It was the duty of men and women in England to support and help this work in every way ; one way was by ending the opium trade, and so showing the Chinese that we were learning to apply Christian principles to our international relations as well as to our personal life.

Strong supporter as he was of Christian missions, J. G. Alexander did not give blind and indiscriminate support to every action of every man who called himself a missionary ; and his constant study of Chinese affairs filled him with misgivings as to the attitude of many Christian missionaries towards militarism. The temptation that has proved too much for many would-be Christians in Europe has often beset the Christian missionary in the East. Instead of living a distinctively Christian life and preaching the pure Gospel of

Christ, he is tempted to live the life of a European and to preach European morality. It was to J. G. Alexander intensely grievous that men who professed to be pioneers of Christianity in non-Christian lands should allow their hearers to believe that war was an inherent part of Christianity. To the Chinese, a people whose minds have never been enslaved by the illusion of military patriotism, it might easily appear that the theory of international hostility was a Christian characteristic; and they might be repelled from Christianity without ever troubling to refer to the words of Christ himself. J. G. Alexander was well qualified to deal with such a danger. Himself strongly sympathetic with the true missionary ideal, and friend of many pious men who had devoted their lives to faithful and unassuming work for the uplift of their fellows, he had that sympathy without which faithful dealing is apt to be worse than useless.

A series of events led him, in the year 1906, to believe that it was his duty to visit China a second time. A great conference of Christian Protestant missionaries to celebrate the centenary of Protestant effort in China was to be held at Shanghai early in 1907; and it seemed that this might provide him with an opportunity of urging on them a fuller recognition of the peaceable nature of the Christian Gospel. Before the Conference he could visit other Chinese mission stations, especially those of the Society of Friends in the western province of Sz-chuan; in this way he could encourage those

who were already teaching a Christianity of peace, and he would get a deeper insight into missionary problems, and into the effect of their activities on the Chinese people. This was the first motive of his journey.

And now, too, came the first signs that victory was at hand after the long and weary struggle to end the opium trade. The ten years' labour since the Commission Report of 1895 was beginning to have an effect. In the introduction to his book, "The Imperial Drug Trade," published in 1905, Joshua Rowntree observed that the publication of the Opium Commission Report had come when "a recrudescence of materialism in the national life threw ethical considerations for the time into the background. Ideals for the betterment of humanity have not prospered. War has cast its deadly shadow over the comity of nations, and selfishness, if only on a sufficiently large scale, has been greatly exalted. The victory for the moment has rested with the forces of organised wealth. These causes have all favoured non-interference in an exceptionally lucrative branch of commerce, carried on with all the prestige of the British Empire. The Chinese obtain the smoke they love, the Indian Treasury obtains the revenue it needs: why should anyone meddle?"

But "the signs of the times suggest that the world is getting through the trough of its recent moral depression,—that truer notes than those of armed force and material gain are already asserting themselves among the nations."

The publication of Joshua Rowntree's book did much to direct this reviving moral sense towards the evil of the opium trade. For the first time the findings of the Royal Commission were publicly submitted to the severest scrutiny. The accumulation of evidence, of findings and of appendices, which had been hurriedly thrown together in most injudicious and disorderly confusion, was systematically sifted and judicially examined, and the whole proceeding was shown to be unworthy of the traditions of English justice. The Anti-Opium Society was vindicated from the accusations contained in the so-called "Historical Sketch" of the trade; and the Chinese Government was cleared from the charge of encouraging its continuance.

During the General Election at the beginning of 1906, nearly two hundred-and-fifty successful candidates formally promised to support the anti-opium cause in Parliament, and others expressed their approval of the policy of the Society. The huge Radical majority was full of men ready to tilt at the monopoly of the Indian Government, and contained many who wished to see the stain of opium cleared from the British name in the Far East. A number of these put down their names for the anti-opium resolution in the ballot for private members' motions in May, 1906, and Mr. Theodore C. Taylor drew the lot which gave him second place for the evening of 30th May. He moved, "That this House re-affirms its conviction that the Indo-Chinese Opium Trade is morally indefensible, and requests His Majesty's Government

to take such steps as may be necessary for bringing it to a speedy close." John Morley, as Secretary of State for India, declared on behalf of the Government "that if China wanted seriously and in good faith to restrict the consumption of this drug . . . the British Government would not close the door." "To any plan for the restriction of the consumption of opium brought forward in good faith, the Government of India and His Majesty's Government would agree, even though it might cost us some sacrifice." The resolution was agreed to without dissent, and the "happy band of pilgrims" —J. G. Alexander amongst them—who had fought so long to reach the goal now in sight, linked each other's arms and marched down from the lobby to the street singing the doxology.

A day or two later, J. G. Alexander went as one of a deputation from the Anti-Opium Society to see John Morley, and they discussed ways and means for arriving at an agreement between the British and Chinese Governments. John Morley's own account of these transactions must be quoted : "Opium has been my chief pre-occupation for the last three or four days. There has been an extraordinary amount of steam up both in England and Scotland against our share in the opium business, and the pledges given at the election so firm, that if the anti-opium motion had gone to a division, it would have been carried by a majority of 200. It required a little steering. The Cabinet gave me *carte blanche*, and I believe I came well enough out

of the debate, which was happily by compulsion of hours a short one, without hurting the feelings either of the office or of my good friends the philanthropists. And here let me warn you that it is a lifelong way of mine not to be afraid of either of two words : ' philanthropist ' is one, and ' agitator ' is the other. Most of what is decently good in our curious world has been done by these two much abused sets of folk. '*

It would have been difficult for the most convinced philanthro-phobe to be afraid of the philanthropist in the person of J. G. Alexander, and the warm feeling was reciprocal. J. G. Alexander had many interviews with those in authority during his lifetime, from emperor and pope downwards ; but none gave him more pleasure than the interview with John Morley. He had believed from the first, when Morley went to the India Office, with a strong anti-opium Under-Secretary, John Edward Ellis, to back him, that victory was near ; now he knew it.

These great events added a second important motive to his project for revisiting China. The British Government was moving at last ; and he could go as an ambassador of the British people, to convince the Chinese that a strong force of public opinion was behind the British Government.

The Meeting for Sufferings approved his concern, and gave him a " minute of liberation," enabling him to travel at the expense and as the representative of the Society of Friends.

* Dispatch to Lord Minto, June 1st, 1906 : in Morley, *Recollections*, II., p. 172.

In August he sent a letter to his colleagues of the Anti-Opium Committee explaining the work he hoped to be able to accomplish for their cause. Already the *Times* correspondent in Peking had sent a forecast of the Decree, issued by the Chinese Imperial Government a few weeks later, for the suppression of the opium vice within ten years. "Here," wrote J. G. Alexander, "it seems to me, is a great opportunity before the Christian Church in China. Why should it not boldly step forward, and offer to help China in freeing itself from its national curse? . . . Let the Christian Churches in China make known their readiness to undertake the cure of opium-smokers in any town or village where the authorities will undertake to put down the opium shops for ever after. Let them devote their main energies for the present to this great work, for which the way will be opened by the knowledge that all foreign compulsion on China to admit opium is now at an end. It seems to me that a movement on these lines might, under the Divine blessing, take hold of the Chinese mind, open to the Christians of China a vantage ground of influence, prepare the way for the spread of the Gospel, and, if it really became a popular movement, bring to an end the slavery of the opium curse long before the ten years are over. May God grant it!" He proceeded to outline a plan for a memorial of the Chinese missionaries to the Government at Peking, and concludes: "These are the suggestions which I expect to lay before the missionaries in China, but which will necessarily be subject

to such modifications as their experience may suggest." "I earnestly crave your prayers that, by the blessing of God, this journey may contribute towards atoning for our country's age-long sin against China in the matter of the opium traffic."

In September, J. G. Alexander, accompanied by his eldest brother, attended the Universal Peace Congress meeting that year at Milan; owing to pressure of time between the sitting of the Congress and the departure of his train for Brindisi he left his bag, containing his round-the-world ticket and other necessities, at the hotel; he was distressed at the trouble caused by his forgetfulness, and wrote to his wife, "It is nothing new to me to realise that I am really quite unfit to travel anywhere by myself—they used to tell me when I was a boy, that I should leave my head behind if it could be unscrewed, and if I ever was any better, I am afraid my childhood has, in this respect, come back to me." Happily, his brother was able to forward the bag to him by P. and O. express, in time to catch the boat.

He spent a fortnight in Ceylon, visiting the Friends' Mission, and also encouraging the agitation for the prohibition of the sale of opium except for medicinal purposes. Fifty years earlier opium-smoking was unknown in Ceylon; but opium had been introduced, opium dens licensed, and a certain small proportion of the natives had become victims of the habit. On this subject he had an interview with the Governor of the island, who thought there was no fear of the vice increasing,

and that no action was required. Following this interview, J. G. Alexander addressed a meeting in Colombo, attended by some English notables, amongst others, where a strong resolution was passed, calling attention to the action prohibiting opium that had been taken in New Zealand, Australia and Japan, and calling for similar action in Ceylon, on the ground that prevention is better than cure.

The fortnight spent by J. G. Alexander in the "States and Straits" was nothing less than a triumphal progress. A vigorous anti-opium agitation had been started amongst the Chinese of the Malay Peninsula a few months before, and it had just come to a head in the discovery of a plant—*Combretum sundiacum*—which cured the opium craving. Hundreds were applying for the medicine, and remarkable cures were taking place. At this moment, J. G. Alexander's visit was announced, and great preparations were made, as reported in the *London Tribune*, for his reception. He himself, in an article in the same paper, wrote at the end of his fortnight's sojourn, "My position as honorary secretary of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade has won for me a hearty welcome from the Chinese communities in Penang, Ipoh (capital of Perak), Kuala Lumpur (capital of Selangor), Malacca and Singapore. In each of these places I have addressed crowded meetings of Chinese, the size of which has only been limited by the largest hall available." The enthusiasm was not confined to the Chinese; an address of welcome came from the Indians of Taipeng, led

by an old friend of J. G. Alexander's, Raju Naidu ; and in addition to the mass meetings of Chinese, smaller meetings were held attended by men of other nations, including English—officials and traders as well as missionaries. It was not J. G. Alexander who aroused the enthusiasm of the audiences ; he was never a rousing speaker ; and he confined his speeches in the main to an account of the growth of the movement in England against the trade and of the position at the moment as between Britain and India and China. But the appeals of the Chinese speakers, and at one or two places of missionaries of wide influence, carried the meeting with them. Resolutions for the prohibition of opium were carried without dissent, even when men interested in the opium farm were among the audience. At Ipoh, over 3,000 dollars were subscribed on the spot and land promised for establishing an opium refuge.

At Kuala Lumpur, where the medicine was being distributed, the most enthusiastic meeting of all was held, preceded by the presentation of leading Chinese "tokays," and a rhymed Chinese address, to the "distinguished visitor," followed by a dinner. The address printed in gold on silk—prepared, of course, before his arrival—ran as follows :—

" When God sends down a great man, he is always appropriate to the opportunity,
He is beforehand allotted a certain duty in order to reap the harvest of success.
The great curse of opium has now spread its poison all over the world,

Who is it that has created this dark hell for us ?

We now swear that we will suppress it as if it were a plague.

Mr. Alexander has now come at the right moment to prove his ability.

God is virtuous and everything he creates is of use.

A grass or a tree is lovable and esteemable ;

When the poppy was originally discovered,

It was used as a medicine for killing pain.

It was afterwards converted for smoking purposes by some unscrupulous persons.

It poisons the blood and impoverishes the health, and spreads out like a contagious disease ;

By prohibiting its use in an improper way, there came war between two nations.

Oh ! this calamity is so dreadful. When shall we have an end of it ?

Fortunately we have now a true-hearted virtuous person to save us

In the person of Mr. Alexander, who is a pioneer in the gallant work.

He comes with all speed from the head office of the Society, Despite all difficulties he uses all efforts to suppress the opium trade.

We cannot do more in return for his kindness but to present him with this address.

We praise the King of Britain for his kindness to his subjects.

We thank the British Parliament for their vote against the opium traffic and their promise to suppress it.

We wish prosperity to his (the king's) reign for a long time, and good health to his person.

May he be succeeded by a long train of generations !

We wish prosperity to the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade,

May the Society meet with success all over the world !

We wish prosperity to Mr. Alexander for his benevolence, May he be remembered for ever by a statue erected to him."

Similar enthusiasm was displayed at Malacca and Singapore. At the former place an anti-opium league was formed after the meeting. J. G. Alexander also helped to bring publicity to bear with regard to the licensed brothels of some of the towns,

which were in a revolting state and where opium-smoking was combined with other vices.

At the end of his journal letter describing these things he wrote, " You will see that the feeling among the Chinese is very strong and cordial. Will they have the perseverance to carry the movement through? That is the question we ask ourselves, and with much hope that the future will give a favourable answer. There is an infusion of the Christian element, though the majority are not Christians, and I was much struck with the note of God's help that was sounded in the address presented to me. And one of the opium smokers under treatment said yesterday, ' God will surely help me to break it off,' so wistfully and earnestly. Surely it is His Spirit that is at work, drawing them to Himself."

At Hongkong, J. G. Alexander was joined by an old Cantonese friend of his from Australia, Cheok Hong Cheong, a Chinese Christian who was no less ardent than his companion in his desire to rid China of opium and to resist the growth of militarism. They visited Canton together, and then travelled by way of Swatow, Amoy and Foochow to Shanghai. They speedily found that great meetings could be held about opium suppression. Everywhere anti-opium leagues welcomed them with dinners and addresses, and they were called on to speak to great meetings, whilst at Hongkong an experiment was started with the newly discovered cure from Kuala Lumpur. Very little, however, could be done for peace except by private

conversation with missionaries and leading Chinese. Some of the missionaries were sympathetic towards the peace mission, and openings were made at several places for addresses to be given to mission schools and colleges on Christianity and War. J. G. Alexander by no means despised these opportunities by reason of the youth of his audiences; in his final journal letter from West China he wrote, "Everything I have seen in China confirms me in the conviction brought home to me in 1894 . . . that such educational work is of the greatest importance. It is training the men who will be, and indeed are already becoming, the leaders of New China. But it needs educationalists who are first of all missionaries . . . It does not seem to me quite creditable to our British Missionary Societies as a whole that they should have taken so small a share in educational work thus far . . . I fear it is our inadequate sense of the value of education at home, as compared with our American cousins, that has left us so far behind them in taking advantage of the wonderful opportunities presented by educational work in China."

One of the great difficulties—but at the same time a most urgent reason—for combining anti-opium and anti-military agitation was that the anti-opium movement had in many parts of China taken root as part of a national movement for a strong China. Here and there, however, it was found possible to introduce a few words on the subject in the anti-opium speeches, and at Shanghai, one or two of the leading missionaries got a dozen

Chinese Christian notables to a private gathering where J. G. Alexander had a full opportunity of explaining his pacifist convictions. "After dinner we were invited to speak on peace. C. H. Cheong began, and said some excellent things about the fall of military nations, and the need of China being given influences suited to her character. . . . Then I spoke. I told them frankly what was my primary object in coming to China, how irreconcilable war is, in my conviction, with Christianity and with true progress, and what a deplorable thing it would be if China were to follow the European example of militarism just when we in Europe are hoping for, and beginning to see, a check put upon it . . . At the close, Mr. Tong remarked that China's army was more for the purpose of keeping order in the interior than anything else, there being at present a rebellion to be put down, also that Japan is waiting to hand back Manchuria till China shall be strong enough to hold it against Russia. But it was too late for any real discussion, and I don't think it would have been very profitable."

From Shanghai a visit was paid to Soochow, where the strong movement against opium, leading up to the imperial decree, had started a few months earlier. Then the two friends proceeded up the Yang-tse by steamer to Hankow, where they separated, C. H. Cheong going to Peking and Japan to undertake some important interviews before he returned home. J. G. Alexander spent Christmas at Hankow, then proceeded the next stage

up the river to Ichang by steamer, and there transhipped into a houseboat in which he, with a party of missionaries, was to travel up through the long and magnificent but dangerous gorges to Chungking, in the Province of Sz-chuan. The scenery and adventures of this voyage have been described in various books; nothing exceptionally thrilling happened on this occasion; one or other of the ropes by which they were towed broke periodically, and a dozen wrecks were witnessed in the rapids; but these things are habitual. "Nothing," wrote J. G. Alexander near the end of the voyage, "has struck me more than the remarkable resourcefulness of these boatmen—it is a quality which the nature of their occupation develops. . . . The men are very pleasant and respectful to us, and their splendid endurance and ready resource cannot be too highly commended. . . . They seem thoroughly to enjoy their work, hard as it is, and enliven it by cheery choruses and songs when, as at the present moment, they are rowing on board. At other times they are most of them engaged in pulling the ropes on shore. Two overseers make a pretence of whipping or beating them with short bamboo rods, but it is little more than a pretence, though I fear the language they use, if I could understand it, would not be found edifying to listen to. With one or two exceptions everyone has been good tempered and willing to work, and it was a pleasure to give them a treat in the way of money for a 'feast'—something better than their usual rice and beans—at Kwei-chou-fu, the first town we stopped at."

At first very good progress was made, but delays were caused higher up, and it was not till the 30th January, after thirty days on the house-boat, that they reached Chungking. The Chinese welcomed them with the noise of many crackers.

Sz-chuan is the province in which English Friends have their mission stations ; J. G. Alexander visited all the permanent stations, going from Chungking by way of Tung-liang and Tung-chwan to Chentu, and returning to Chungking by Ta-choo. For this journey, which occupied over a month, he was accompanied by one of the Friend missionaries, W. A. Maw. All the journeying was by sedan-chair, and the jolting motion, combined with irregularity of food, was very distressing to J. G. Alexander, who suffered severely. He was temporarily restored to health and vigour by the ministrations of the Friends at each stopping-place, especially at Chentu, where an old friend of his wife's, Mary J. Davidson, tended him. In spite of this he carried through a considerable programme of work, addressing meetings at the chief towns visited, and having an interview with the Viceroy of the Province at Chentu. Sz-chuan was one of the Provinces in which the poppy was most extensively cultivated and opium very generally smoked. In other Provinces the decree for suppression had already brought about a decrease of cultivation, but so far the crops in Sz-chuan were almost as extensive as ever. However, the Viceroy had several commissioners (" Tao-tai ") to help him in the work of enforcing the decree. One of

these was a man of exceptional vigour, who had already transformed Chentu into a city of clean streets, efficient police and modern inventions. A second commissioner, who also had much influence with the Viceroy, although notoriously anti-British, obtained the interview. The Viceroy, who was attended by his Tao-tai, was very cordial, and commissioned J. G. Alexander to telegraph at once to Malay for 200 taels' worth of the cure—*Combreum sundiacum*. A day or two after the interview, J. G. Alexander and one of the missionaries, R. J. Davidson, called by appointment on the first commissioner, the vigorous Mr. Tso, who told them that notice had been given to close all opium dens in the city by the fourth moon, after which time sales were to be by government officials only, and only to those registered by the police. And by the time the travellers were back at Chungking, stories were coming from a few districts in the Province of the rooting up of crops of poppy already sown.

A huge public meeting was organised in Chentu, those who attended in the hall or outside being computed at ten to twelve thousand. Missionaries and officials of long experience could hardly recall such a gathering, and it was perfectly orderly. An official address was read by the public orator, followed by speeches from J. G. Alexander and several Chinese. The British consul assured him before he left Chentu that his visit had done what neither consul nor missionaries could do—by coming so far in such a cause he had done much to prevent

the anti-opium movement from becoming anti-British.

After ten days at Chentu, the chair-riding was resumed, with disastrous effects once more. But after his stay at Ta-choo, where a gathering of some of the missionaries was held, J. G. Alexander was better, and reached Chungking again safely. There he spent a week attending the Committee of Missionaries, visiting and speaking to the schools and to other audiences and enjoying the Quaker atmosphere. Although his stay in West China was so brief he managed to show an interest in every branch of the mission work. The efforts of business men at the International Friends' Institute, in Chungking, the itinerating work in the big country districts and the plans then on foot for the establishment of a Union University in Chentu, all received his sympathy and support. Moreover, he gained sufficient insight into the work to be able to render much help, both as advocate and counsellor, to the China Committee of the Friends' Foreign Mission Association on which he served after his return to England.

During this journey he found recreation by reading Boswell's "Life of Johnson," and was delighted with a passage in which Dr. Johnson insisted that Boswell, by undertaking a journey to see the Wall of China "would do what would be of importance in raising your children to eminence"—Boswell had said he thought he should go, had he not children to take care of. "There would be a lustre reflected upon them from your

spirit and curiosity. They would be at all times regarded as the children of a man who had gone to view the Wall of China. I am serious, Sir." J. G. Alexander writes to his wife, "I thought you and the boys would be interested with this passage. Only I think they would rather be known as the son of the man who 'came many ten thousand li to help China to break off opium' than of one who only went to see the Great Wall out of curiosity. This was how I was introduced to the great meeting at Chentu."

It is clear that he inspired affection in many hearts, especially among the Chinese Quaker community in Sz-chuan; at his parting one of them urged him to return with the missionaries going on furlough with whom he was setting off down the Yang-tse.

The journey down the river was, of course, more rapid, and was also less eventful than the upward passage. By the middle of April, he was again at Hankow, and he visited not only the adjacent cities but also Nanking, where he saw the Viceroy, who was taking vigorous action for the suppression of opium. The Viceroy of Hu-peh, on the other hand, the aged Chang Chih-Tung, who had given J. G. Alexander such a helpful message in 1894, was too old and inert to take action in a reform for which he had once fought as fiercely as any man in China. J. G. Alexander was disturbed to find that the British Ambassador was already instructing the consuls to send in reports of action taken for opium suppression; there were rumours

of a change of face on the part of the Imperial Government at Peking ; and it seemed to him that any enquiry into the sincerity of the Government or its agents was altogether premature. " All this," he writes, " confirms me in the conviction that the policy of co-operation between the British and Chinese Governments is by far the safest and wisest way of carrying out the suppression of the Opium Trade, and that the pressure brought in the interests of the Indian Opium revenue to ensure that the Chinese Government should carry out its avowed policy will turn out to be a material help in bringing about the great reform we all desire to see accomplished."

Thus once again the " agitator and philanthropist " anticipated the statesmanlike policy that was brought into operation after eighteen months' further agitation, and that led to the end of the Indian opium trade, and, for a time at least, of Chinese poppy-culture.

A renewal of his indisposition prevented J. G. Alexander from reaching Shanghai in time for the opening of the great conference of missionaries. He listened to the discussions with the deepest interest. His travels had given him a stronger affection for the missionaries and a better understanding of the problems with which they were confronted. They were doing, according to their various lights, all that they could to help the great nation whose needs had made such an appeal to him ; and now, to sit and listen to the leading missionaries, men of exceptional intellectual and

spiritual distinction, from every part of that great empire, was to him a rare delight. Others, like himself, were there to represent the missionary societies in Europe ; but the discussions were carried on by the missionaries, the visitors only being allowed a single speech of a few minutes apiece. J. G. Alexander was, however, in close and friendly touch with Rev. Arnold Foster. This missionary had done much, from the Chinese end, to keep the anti-opium movement alive in the period of depression after 1895 ; he was in keen sympathy with J. G. Alexander's peace concern ; and now he was chairman of the Conference Committee on Memorials, and in that capacity prepared five documents. These included a valuable statement on the opium question, followed by two resolutions, which the Conference approved. In addition to these general resolutions, addressed to all whom they might concern, on the day devoted to Medical Missions it was resolved "to urge on missions throughout China that they should seek more energetically to combat this great evil in every possible way ; that they should extend the work of opium refuges ; and that they should above all make prominent in all their efforts, and in each individual case, the power of Christ as the only sure hope of permanent salvation from the degradation of this vice." So far as opium was concerned, J. G. Alexander was well satisfied with the decisions.

The only opportunity of referring to the matter which, above all else, had brought him from England, occurred at the close of the Conference.

Dr. Timothy Richard, after consultation with him, moved a resolution recommending the observance throughout the Chinese mission fields of the Sunday before Christmas as Peace Sunday. Owing to the pressure of time J. G. Alexander had only three minutes instead of seven, in which to speak in support of the resolution. In those minutes he dealt as well as he could "with the general subject of the attitude of missionaries to militarism." He was able, he wrote, to "feel that I have at least placed them before the conscience and thought of the missionaries." And he followed up this action by getting the peace societies of England and America to send their peace pamphlets to all the missionaries in time for Peace Sunday that year.

Before leaving for Japan he paid a visit to Ning-po. "At 11.0 the meeting was held, in the Presbyterian Church, Archdeacon Moule presiding and interpreting—my last meeting in China! Shall I ever visit it again? I could but begin by expressing my thankfulness to Him who, I believe, called me here and has cared for me and watched over me, and then to the Chinese people, who, high and low, have given me such a cordial and kind welcome—a welcome which I take as belonging to all those in England who have striven to put an end to this opium curse."

And so he took leave of China, leaving behind him, indeed, a good deal of his heart, and much warmth of friendship in other hearts—to return there often in spirit, but in the body not again.

His letters show that he was impressed with the signs pointed out to him by some of his missionary

friends of the grave dangers towards which China was drifting; the military spirit was growing, creating fierce antagonism and division within the country, more serious than any aspect it might bear towards the world outside. And this was only one of many perils that contact with the West was bringing to China. He had done a little to encourage the Chinese where they were on the road to good, and to warn them of the evil along some of the other roads they might travel. He had not been able to do much—no man could in so few months. But he had hope. He saw the greatness of the Chinese nature, the resolution with which they were dealing with opium, the wisdom with which they appreciated the value of the newer education of the mission schools, their inherent good qualities. They appeared to him peaceable, kindly, reliable, industrious, cheerful and contented. These things led him to believe that they would rise above the perils that beset them, and avert some of the catastrophes which have overtaken other great nations. He passed on to see how the sister-nation, Japan, was fitting her Eastern soul into the new body she had just borrowed from the West.

Japan, he found, had acquired the American lionising habit. Within twenty-four hours of landing at Kobe he had had to give interviews to three newspapers editors, and the papers gave full reports of a series of peace meetings that he addressed. In un-military China, public peace meetings had been considered unwise; in military Japan there was no difficulty. A year before, an American

Friend Missionary at Tokyo, Gilbert Bowles, had founded a Japanese Peace Society, and it had been joined by some distinguished men. They were just celebrating their first anniversary, calling it "Hague Day"; so Gilbert Bowles, having made arrangements for a big demonstration in Tokyo, travelled south in time to organise meetings to be addressed by J. G. Alexander and one or two others in the three southern towns of Kobe, Osaka and Kyoto. At Kobe, J. G. Alexander spoke twice; first he lectured at the Higher Commercial School on the four approaches to peace—economic, humanitarian, moral and religious—and then he spoke to a public meeting on the "Progress and Prospects of International Justice," tracing the growth of international law and arbitration from Grotius to the Second Hague Conference, due to meet that year. This address was repeated at Osaka and Kyoto; at the latter town the meeting was followed by the formation of a branch of the Japan Peace Society, with distinguished Japanese and Europeans on its committee. He also addressed a religious meeting, and spoke to the students of the Doshisha—founded by the first Japanese Christian—on Christian Patriotism. And before leaving for Tokyo he spent a glorious day in the mountains.

At Tokyo, five more newspaper representatives came for an interview on anti-opium work and further meetings were held; the Minister of Education, to whom he had an introduction, received him, and the Japanese Peace Society gave him a banquet, where, he says, he felt like a child among men of

such attainments. All this may seem impressive ; but for depth of feeling it was not in any way comparable to the movement against opium in China, and amongst the Chinese of Malaysia. The Japanese seemed to be testing the latest European or American movement—pacifism—with the same superficial and short-sighted gaiety with which other western inventions had been received. They would applaud academic discourses on goodwill among nations or learned dissertations on international justice ; but it was not safe for the orator of peace to go deeper into the heart of the matter ; he must not call upon his hearers to decide between the way to militarism and the way to peace. Yet even though they might seem to be combining lip-service of the God of peace with life-service of the God of battles, J. G. Alexander took hope even from their lip-service. It was something to have the opportunity of putting before them some part of the pacifist faith ; and he was thankful for the opportunity that had been given him, quite unexpectedly, to help the faithful few who knew that, in spite of appearances, they were really pioneers in a hard struggle.

J. G. Alexander returned to England by quite a different route from that followed in 1894. He crossed the Pacific by way of Honolulu to San Francisco, and spent a couple of weeks in California, speaking to gatherings of Friends of his experiences in China and Japan, and attending California Yearly Meeting (of which he was English correspondent) at Whittier. The manner of worship, and conduct of proceedings, amongst the Friends of

Western America are unlike those of British and Eastern American Friends. But J. G. Alexander found it "all very interesting and cheering," and adds, "you know I am not easily upset by outside differences of method, and there is the true Quaker spirit at bottom." In crossing the continent he had further opportunities of interesting Friends in missionary, opium and peace work, at Chicago, at the "Quaker city" of Richmond, Indiana, at New York and elsewhere. He made a slight *détour* in order to see Niagara once more, feeling that "it would seem wrong to pass close by without a visit."

His boat reached Plymouth in the early morning of the 25th July, and later in the morning, accompanied by his wife and two sons, he entered the meeting-house at Southampton, where his Quarterly Meeting was in session, returned his "minute of liberation," and joined with those who had been following his travels with close sympathy and prayer for nearly a year, in rendering thanks for what he had been enabled to do, and for his safe return home.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SOCIETY OF FRIENDS AND OTHER INTERESTS

1903-14

AFTER the five years of missionary travels in France, J. G. Alexander, as a member of the Continental Committee of the Society of Friends, undertook some visits to Norway and Denmark. In both countries small groups of Friends existed. Quakerism had taken root in Norway immediately after the Napoleonic Wars, and had flourished in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The full vigour of the early growth, however, does not seem to have been maintained. Various factors contributed to this condition. The membership seems never to have included many who had the intellectual force to be leaders; they were rather inclined to emphasise peculiarities of speech and dress, and to miss the deeper spiritual realities for which the Society of Friends has stood. Many who might have brought strength to the Society in Norway emigrated to America. As in other continental countries, the refusal of compulsory military service was a severe test on each generation of men; and by 1900, a generation was growing up that was impatient of the conservatism of their

elders, and was inclined to join in with the stream of modern religious and social thought. In Denmark, where Quakerism had taken root later, less emphasis was laid on externals, but the other causes of weakness were in some degree present there too. Several English and American Friends had undertaken visits to these Friends from time to time, and J. G. Alexander's understanding of conservative Quakerism, of evangelical doctrine and behaviour, and also of modern liberal tendencies fitted him to be a conciliator amongst them. He had already once attended the Yearly Meeting of Danish Friends in 1883. He was not however able to speak either Danish or Norse fluently.

On his first visit to Norway, in June, 1903, he travelled to Stavanger with two American Friends, Charles and May Replogle, and a Swede, J. Lundquist. They arrived shortly before the Friends' School broke up for the holidays, and J. G. Alexander told the older children of his journey round the world. He noted with interest various Norwegian customs. At one house a little boy of seven "and his sister of (I think) ten, when they came to speak to us, gave us a bow and a curtsy, the latter just such a curtsy as the little girls used to give—'drop a curtsy to the gentleman'—in Herefordshire when I was a boy. The boy's profound bow I never saw equalled in England; only a Chinese boy could come up to it, I should say." Another custom did not give him so much pleasure: "the way they drive uphill and down dale, especially the latter, is a bit trying to one's nerves."

The annual meeting of Norwegian Friends, attended by over 150 members, was held at Stavanger before the end of the month. After it was over J. G. Alexander paid a number of visits to Quaker centres up and down the country; when he arrived the Friends of the district were called together for a meeting for worship in the house of one of the members. In some of these places religious meetings were rarely held; the local Friends were too few and lacking in initiative or capacity to hold meetings without some special visitor; and the visit from the Lutheran priest to the local chapel, in some of the scattered parishes divided by mountains and fjords, could only be expected once in every few weeks. So that any word spoken by a special visitor might be pondered over for many days. From the first place, Sövde, J. G. Alexander writes, "I begin this letter sitting on a bank overlooking one of the grandest waterfalls I have ever seen and in the most perfect weather. The voyage yesterday from Stavanger was exceedingly beautiful, especially the latter part of it, and here I am only five minutes' walk from the meeting-house where we lodge, taking our meals at a Friend's house close by. Most of the food we brought with us from Stavanger so as not to be a burden to the Friends here who are poor. The meeting house, built in 1856, is a simple wooden house with two rooms, both double bedded, on the the first floor: as at Stavanger the crockery has the inscription 'Erindring fra England, 1875, 2 Tim. iv. 22.' " At another place one of the men who came to the meetings had "suffered imprisonment five years in succession for refusing military service,

ten, twenty, thirty, forty, and fifty days respectively, in solitary confinement." In several places J. G. Alexander gave peace lectures, and he interested the people with accounts of the Vaudois and of passive resistance to the Education rate in England.

After these visits near Stavanger and Bergen he and his fellow-travellers went north as far as the Vigten Islands, to visit two English Friends, J. J. Armistead and his wife, who had settled there to work among the Norwegian fisher-folk. Here they came in contact with a small sect called the Frie Venner—Free Friends—a spontaneous growth of non-ritualists, similar in some respects to the Society of Friends.

Thence J. G. Alexander returned to Stavanger, visited Christiania, and crossed to Copenhagen, spending a week visiting the groups of Danish Friends before returning to England.

It was not in his nature to visit people once and then pass from them for ever. He was not even content with keeping up correspondence with those he had met on his journeys ; this side of his correspondence was always large, and it was often astonishing to observe how closely he had entered into the lives of those he had only seen for a few days, or at whose houses he had lodged for a single night. But beyond this he believed, like the apostle Paul, that a second visit is needed ; the visitor is remembered and welcomed as an old friend, and the fact that he has thought it worth while to return shows that he, at least, was not wholly disappointed by his first visit. He can confirm the work already begun. Accordingly,

in 1904, again in June, he revisited Scandinavia, having as companion a younger Friend, Alfred Lynn.

On the voyage across he broke his little toe, an accident which interfered with some of his movements, but did not prevent him from carrying out the programme that had been planned. After some days spent in Stavanger an expedition was undertaken to the remote mountain village of Kvinesdal, reached from Stavanger by way of Flekkefjord, where there was a little Quaker community. The first part of the return journey was taken by night in an open boat down the fjord. "It was nearly eleven when we put off in our boat down the river, leaving our kind host on the bank, and nearly midnight when we reached Oie, at the mouth of the river, where another boat was waiting with two men, to row us across the fjord—this had been arranged by telephone. The river boat was a flat-bottomed one; that on the fjord was entirely different, with sharply pointed prow and stern and as the men rowed in splendid concert they made rapid progress, except twice when there was a good deal of roughness, owing to a fresh breeze that had sprung up from the sea. We all got some sleep; Arne and I had just room to lie down side by side in the stern, while A. Lynn lay in the bow. About three we landed at Flekkefjord, after a lovely row, the moon having emerged very beatifully soon after we started, while we never lost the glow of sunset in the north, and often we rowed past grand cliffs, sometimes very close to us."

After another day or two in Stavanger they set out for the north, going as far as the Lofoten Islands. This long journey was nearly fruitless owing to miscalculations and misadventures ; but J. G. Alexander was greatly interested in some memorials of Hans Egede, the apostle of Greenland, who had been a pastor in these islands at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

It was also the only time in all his travels when he crossed the Arctic circle. He never crossed the Equator.

Turning south again the travellers spent some days in the Vigten Islands, and then from Trondhjem took train to Christiania. Thence after a few days they travelled by Gothenburg and Fredrikshavn to Veile, where the annual meeting of Danish Friends was to be held that year. They were celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of their inauguration as a separate society. After this and a visit to a Lutheran Dean (Provst) and his family, J. G. Alexander spent a day or two at Copenhagen and then proceeded alone into Germany.

The Society of Friends in Germany was almost extinct. At Minden a handful of members still kept up a meeting, and at the neighbouring town of Oberkirchen a still smaller number remained, who had received no visit from an English Friend for ten years. There seems to have been little or no vital force left in these small Quaker communities on the continent ; and the visits of J. G. Alexander and other English and American Friends did not inspire them with any great mission to their fellow-countrymen.

What this little succession of faithful visitors did for Quakerism on the continent of Europe was to keep open the contact with mystical religion in England, to keep a few embers burning until the day should come when, kindled in the furnace of war, the fire would blaze out once more to set the hills on fire.

* * * *

In 1905 an opportunity occurred for J. G. Alexander to visit Palestine. An elderly Birmingham Friend, Samuel Price, wanted someone to accompany him on a journey through Palestine, and asked J. G. Alexander as an "experienced traveller." Samuel Price had first paid a visit, accompanied by another Friend, Isaac Sharp, to Egypt, and there J. G. Alexander joined them, and climbed the Great Pyramid and saw the Sphinx. It is scarcely possible perhaps for those who have not lived with the Bible as daily guide and looked on it as a storehouse of endless wealth, to be drawn on for deep truth, for poetic beauty, for study of human character, for graphic tales of great deeds, to appreciate what a visit to Palestine means to those for whom the Bible is all this and more. J. G. Alexander's faith was not of the kind that accepts every traditional site as authentic. It was enough for him that he had seen the country where all those familiar deeds of ancient days were enacted; he had seen Jerusalem and walked and slept and fed there; he had been down from Jerusalem to Jericho; he had seen the Dead Sea and the valley of the Jordan; he had ridden over the country to Damascus, sleeping

on the way in a tent. The experience did not overwhelm him. He used to tell a story of some man who visited Palestine and was a bore to his friends and relations for the rest of his life. He wished to avoid such an anti-climax and he did avoid it. The local colour could be introduced when it was wanted ; but it never blotted out the picture it was intended to illuminate. And, after all, he was not a man of only one journey.

J. G. Alexander's wife and second son went round the Mediterranean that same spring, and the two parties joined forces at Jaffa for a few days, and visited Jerusalem and Jericho together. From Damascus S. Price and J. G. Alexander went to Baalbec and then to Beyrout, and spent two or three days with the Friends' Mission on the Lebanon. They took part in various meetings that were held, encouraged the missionaries, and in one place spent an evening playing games—the first games the missionaries had played for months—"so I hope we have done them some good," comments J. G. Alexander. He was astonished by the original method by which one of the missionaries, a Syrian, induced people to attend a Bible reading. The missionary was also post-master ; so he took the mail to the hall, first gave the Bible Reading and at the end distributed the letters.

The travellers went very happily together ; they got a good deal of amusement from the forgetfulness and absentmindedness of the "experienced traveller." J. G. Alexander was, in fact, not at all a good traveller. On all his travels he lost things

and missed connections or got out at the wrong station or went by the wrong train; and what was worse, travelling commonly played havoc with his health. Unusual food, a long day's travelling or other extra fatigue, was apt to involve a day or half a day in bed. And occasionally on his journeys through France, the succession of meetings, for some of which he would rise almost straight from his bed, prevented him from recovering his health for many days together. He suffered much less on the Palestine journey than on most. But, although he was such a bad traveller, he travelled on, cheerful, undaunted and appreciative of all the good things he saw and experienced.

* * * *

In the early years of the twentieth century reports from missionaries and others began to reach Europe of the ruthless economic exploitation of the Congo. We have seen with what pleasure J. G. Alexander had greeted the Acts of the Berlin Congress of 1885 and the Brussels Congress of 1890. In fact these Acts were, as far as they went, excellent. Slave raids and slavery were alike prohibited from a great part of central Africa, warfare and the trade in arms were abolished, the gin traffic was restricted, trade was opened to all nations; and all this was done in the name of all the European Powers. But the territory in which these regulations were to apply was left to the control of the various imperial states, and a great part of the Congo basin itself to a private corporation under the absolute despotism of Leopold, King of the Belgians. There was no international

commission with authority to supervise the proper execution of the spirit and letter of the treaty. Leopold observed the letter: he could not use slave labour; but he could tax the natives; and he did. As they could not pay money he levied taxes in kind and by forced labour; and his methods, as every one knows, were as cruel and ruthless as any slavery has ever been. He could not import arms or wage war in the Congo; but he could exact military service from the natives. This also he did. And his methods provoked perpetual insurrections.

When the facts began to reach the Anti-Slavery Society J. G. Alexander was deeply stirred. On behalf of that Society, and in close touch with Mr. E. D. Morel and the Congo Reform Association, he employed his knowledge of Europe, and his friendship with men of many nations, in the effort to rouse the Governments to action, and the conscience of the people in Belgium and elsewhere to demand reform.

As soon as the missionary, J. H. Harris, came from the Congo in 1905 with first-hand accounts of the atrocities, J. G. Alexander obtained an interview with the elder Count Bernstorff, then in London. He asked him if it would be useful for a small deputation of Friends, accompanied by Mr. Harris, to go to Berlin and interview a few influential people. Count Bernstorff replied that it would certainly be useful, and advised that it should be done. He also undertook to get leading members of different parties in the Reichstag to meet the deputation. The Meeting for Sufferings unanimously liberated

E. W. Brooks and J. G. Alexander to go to Berlin, accompanied by J. H. Harris ; and they visited Belgium on the way, in order to ascertain the feeling of Belgian public opinion. In Brussels they found that the facts were fully known by the publication of the Report of a Commission and there did not seem much to be done. In Berlin Count Bernstorff arranged for them to meet four leading members of three Reichstag parties, and they had one or two other interviews, all of them satisfactory. Returning through Belgium they reported on their Berlin visit to the Congo reform leaders in Brussels, and had further conference with them as to methods of attacking the evil. They also visited Paris. Here, as in Berlin and Brussels, a small group of sympathisers was ready to listen and co-operate to some extent in spreading the knowledge of the facts. That was all, however. Yet neither the apathy of the French, the hostility of the Belgians, nor the indifference of the Germans disheartened J. G. Alexander. His desire to awaken the conscience of the people, first of all in England, was all the greater. At this time it is almost true to say that he brought into every speech he made, every article or letter he wrote, some word or sentence that showed the intensity of his feeling in the matter.

He brought it up at the International Peace Conference at Milan in 1906, on his way to the East ; but he could only get the Congress to pass a general resolution condemning forced labour in Africa, especially on the Congo, but without reference to King Leopold or his satellites,

Whilst he was in China the Belgian Government took the first steps towards the annexation of the Congo Free State ; but on his return to England he found that reform was not thereby accomplished, and he set to work again. In the autumn of 1907 he attended an Italian Anti-Slavery Congress in Rome, mainly composed of Roman Catholic priests, from cardinals downwards, with a sprinkling of foreign delegates. Some of the members of the congress were received by the Pope. J. G. Alexander, as a vice-president, was among the number. Of this he wrote, " Notwithstanding the difficulties between a convinced Protestant like myself and the fervent Catholics by whom I was surrounded, there was a profound unity in our motives of action. I was made to feel this throughout . . . in fact the Pope shook hands with me and accepted a pamphlet on the Congo question with the utmost cordiality." This casual reference to the Pope's handshake caused quite a sensation among some of his relatives and others who heard of it. One of them declared that only one other man had ever done such a thing, and some of his friends used to tell him that the Pope must have held out his hand to be kissed, not to be shaken, but he was never convinced of this : he had explained his scruples to one of the cardinals beforehand, and this man introduced him to the Pope with some words of explanation.

Apart from Congo affairs the chief business of the Congress was the slave trade from Central Africa to Tripoli.

The following spring (1908), having first visited the Hague, in order to promote international action for the suppression of opium, he re-visited Brussels to participate in a meeting organised by the Belgian Ligue du Droit des Hommes. Several Frenchmen were also present, one of them, the Senator M. de Pressensé, being the chief speaker. "He spoke for about an hour and a half, one constant flow of history, sociology and practical colonial politics, full of keen yet delicate irony; altogether a perfect masterpiece of persuasive eloquence. . . . Nothing could have served the cause better; there was the note of respectful admiration for Belgian History and institutions which was calculated to win the confidence of his hearers, and he did not shrink from speaking in the strongest terms of reprobation of the doings in the French Congo. . . . I did not speak, it was not thought best, and indeed there was no need." At the close a resolution was unanimously adopted.

In September, 1909, the annual Universal Peace Congress was held at Brussels. J. G. Alexander moved a resolution, that the Congress, in view of the annexation of the Congo Free State by Belgium in 1908, appealed to the Belgian people to adopt and execute, without delay, the radical reforms needed to put an end to the abuses revealed by the Commission of enquiry, especially by abolishing forced labour and giving back to the natives their land and its products; the resolution also included a demand for a fresh Congress of the Powers to see to the due execution of the treaties of 1885 and 1890.

In his speech, J. G. Alexander insisted, first, that the actual situation in the Congo was one of chronic warfare, and secondly, that the demand for reform was becoming so clamorous in the United States, Great Britain and other countries that the peace of Europe was in danger. He did not blame the Belgian people for the past. As in England before the Boer War, Belgian public opinion had been led astray by false reports. But now the full facts had been laid before them by their own Commission of Enquiry.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

This speech kindled the fury of the Belgian imperialists. The *Indépendance Belge* wrote a fierce article declaring that his life would not be safe if he ever set foot in Belgium again. One of the leading reformers, on the other hand, wrote that the resolution had produced more effect than all the previous solemn declarations in Parliament. The venerable peace-worker, Frédéric Passy, wrote : “ On m’a lu dans *l’Indépendance Belge* le compte-rendu du Congrès et les réclamations de quelques Belges. J’espère que vous n’en êtes pas trop ému. Nous avons toujours émis les mêmes vœux et les mêmes protestations en tous pays et contre les nôtres comme contre les gouvernements étrangers et nous avons bien fait.”*

* “ The report in the *Indépendance Belge* of the Congress and the protests of certain Belgians have been read to me. I hope you are not too much affected by them. We have always expressed the same opinions and the same protest in all countries, against our own as against foreign governments, and in so doing we have done right.”

In a volume of essays on "Morales et Religions," published in 1909, M. Raoul Allier, a leading French Protestant, describing "La Morale des Quakers," gives his impressions of an English Quaker, easily identifiable as J. G. Alexander. "Il y a un an un homme de leur secte se présentait dans mon cabinet pour me demander s'il ne serait pas possible d'organiser en France un mouvement d'opinion contre les horreurs du Congo léopoldien. Je lui demandai s'il ne craignait pas de passer pour un agent à la solde des négociants de Manchester. Il sourit et me répondit que, si, pour proclamer une réclamation de justice, il fallait attendre que la calomnie eût désarmé, l'attente serait trop longue et trop d'iniquités auraient le temps d'être commises : 'Le chrétien, ajouta-t-il, doit accepter son devoir, même si ce devoir le condamne à être diffamé et bafoué parmi les hommes.'

"Le quaker qui me parlait ainsi est un homme fort connu, encore qu'il cherche l'obscurité et le silence. Si les uns l'accusent volontiers d'être à la solde d'Anglais préoccupés d'expédier leurs cotonnades au Congo, d'autres l'accusent non moins volontiers d'être au service des ennemis de l'Angleterre. C'est qu'en effet, depuis qu'il a l'âge d'homme, il est la cheville ouvrière de la ligue contre l'opium. Il n'ignore pas que l'introduction forcée de l'opium en Chine est une source de richesses pour l'Inde anglaise. Mais il déclare que c'est surtout un déshonneur pour l'Angleterre. Il répète dans ses articles, dans ses conférences, que ce déshonneur étant consenti est pire que celui de

batailles perdues. Il le dit en face à ses compatriotes. Il le dit devant l'étranger, avec l'espoir que le souci d'un bon renom à conserver à leur patrie rendra ses concitoyens capables des décisions généreuses et des sacrifices héroïques.

"Quand on voit un homme de cette trempe agir toujours dans le même sens, avec un entêtement doux, irréductible dans ses revendications, capable de manifester une vraie tendresse pour ceux contre lesquels il s'indigne, on sent qu'il n'y a rien à faire contre une puissance de ce genre. On pense au mot de Cromwell qui, après avoir essayé en vain d'attirer Fox parmi ses fidèles et l'avoir trouvé aussi incorruptible à la faveur qu'inébranlable dans la persécution, s'était écrié : 'Je vois s'élever une race de gens que je ne gagnerai ni par des honneurs, ni par des présents, ni par des emplois.' . . . C'est la race des gêneurs que les politiciens ont toujours haïe. Elle pullule dans le quakerisme."*

* "One year a man of their [Quaker] sect came to my study in order to ask me if it would not be possible to organise a movement of public opinion in France against the horrors of the Leopoldian régime in the Congo. I asked him if he was not afraid of being taken for a paid agent of the Manchester merchants. He smiled and told me that, if, before demanding justice, it were necessary to wait until calumny were silenced, the time of waiting would be long and iniquities would flourish meanwhile. 'The Christian,' he added, 'must do his duty, even if it condemn him to be abused and derided by men.'

"The Quaker who spoke thus to me is a well-known man, although he prefers obscurity and silence. If some men take pleasure in accusing him of being in the pay of Englishmen who want to send their cotton goods to the Congo, others take no less pleasure in accusing him of being in the service of the enemies of England. This is because, ever since early manhood, he has been the main-spring of the anti-opium society. He does not overlook the fact that the forced introduction of opium into China is a source of wealth to British India. But he declares that it is above all a dishonour to England. In his writings and speeches he repeats that this

This quotation has led us away from Congo Reform. It only remains to add that before the end of 1909 the Belgian Government gave way to the united pressure of the British and German Governments, and the public opinion of the world.

Similar evils following on the economic exploitation of Africa and South America had to be combatted by the Anti-Slavery Society in the years immediately preceding the war. In the case of labour abuses in the New Hebrides, islands administered jointly by England and France, J. G. Alexander was able to put the Society into communication with friends of native races in France who could bring pressure to bear from their side. Labour conditions in the cocoa plantations of the Islands of San Thomé and Principé and in Angola, and the frightful oppression of the Indians in the Putumayo, all claimed his attention. But his strength, never great, was diminishing, and he recognised the need for concentrating his energies.

* * * *

The opium trade between India and China was

wilful dishonour is worse than the dishonour of losing battles. He says it to his compatriots. He says it before foreigners, hoping that the desire to preserve their country's good name will rouse his fellow-countrymen to generous decision and heroic sacrifice.

"When one sees a man of this stamp conforming to the same standard in all his actions, with sweet obstinacy, abating nothing in his demands, yet showing true gentleness towards those against whom he fights, one feels that nothing can avail against such a force. The words of Cromwell come to mind, who, after having tried in vain to enlist Fox among his followers, and having found him as incorruptible to favour as he was unyielding to persecution, cried: 'I see there is raised up a race of men whom I shall gain neither by honours, nor by presents, nor by preferment.' This is the difficult race that the politicians have always hated. It thrives among the Quakers."

annually decreasing according to the treaty of 1908 ; and the growth in China itself had been decreased far more rapidly than the treaty stipulations demanded. But China and India were not the only countries concerned. In Java, in the Straits Settlements, in French Indo-China, the opium traffic still persisted. In February, 1909, an International Commission met at Shanghai, to discuss the suppression of the traffic, but it did not arrive at any useful agreement. At the end of 1911, at the call of the American Government, a further Conference of the States concerned was held at the Hague. Sir Matthew Dodsworth and J. G. Alexander, on behalf of the English anti-opium movement, spent a fortnight in the Hague whilst the Conference was in session, and had opportunities of furnishing the various national delegations with full information from their point of view. Some of the members of the Conference were very friendly to the anti-opium cause, and one of the Chinese members, Dr. Wu, was a personal friend of J. G. Alexander. So they had ample opportunity of making their presence felt. The result of the Conference's labours was an excellent Convention which, unhappily, had only been ratified and put into effect by a few Governments before the outbreak of war.

In 1912, after the revolution in China, the Chinese were unwilling to accept any more chests of opium from India, and Dr. Sun Yat Sen, provisional president, appealed to England to stop the trade. Even the merchants approved this course, provided the British Government would help them to

get rid of the unsaleable stocks accumulated at Hongkong and Shanghai. This condition the anti-opium people could not approve, and for months they had to carry on delicate negotiations, trying to pacify the Indian Government and the merchants without forcing on China the opium that her people refused to smoke. Finally the Chinese Government bought most of the opium and destroyed it.

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J. G. Alexander continued throughout his life a devoted member of the Society of Friends. For many years he served on its executive, the Meeting for Sufferings, and on several of the sub-committees of that body. A year or two before the war a member of the Meeting for Sufferings complained that the same Friends were appointed on a number of committees, whilst others were on none; and he added that he had found one name on six sub-committees. J. G. Alexander guessed that it was his name, and found that this was so. But it is natural that a good committee-man should be appointed to several committees, instead of bad committee-men being appointed in equal number.

He was also on three of the sub-committees of the Friends' Foreign Mission Association, and of this work Dr. H. T. Hodgkin observes, "Among committee members there are two prominent types, those who simply attend and offer suggestions and criticism at the time of meeting and those who always keep the matter in mind, and make it their business to enquire, advise or suggest whenever anything arises between committees that bears on the work.

Needless to say the latter are those who give life and value to any committee. In his foreign mission work J. G. Alexander was pre-eminently one of the second type."

Although he was such a valued member of many committees he was not one of those "weighty Friends" who may intervene in almost any discussion and whose judgment always carries weight. In large assemblies, such as the Meeting for Sufferings or Yearly Meeting, he would rarely speak except on his own subjects, such as opium, or he might intervene on small points of practical procedure, bringing his legal mind to bear. In the Society of Friends, no less than elsewhere, his influence was exerted behind the scenes.

In his own locality, however, he felt it right to take greater responsibility, and a fuller share in the discussions of his Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, where his judgment was much valued. In addition to his frequent minutes of liberation for Christian work outside the borders of the Quarterly Meeting he undertook his full share in "strengthening the Church" within. Especially he felt the need of isolated and struggling Meetings; several times he visited the Channel Islands and the Isle of Wight whose small Meetings belong to Sussex, Surrey, and Hants Quarterly Meeting, and from Tunbridge Wells he often went over for the week-end to help in a country meeting near Herstmonceux, in Sussex, just as in early life he had visited Thakeham from Reigate. In his own town the claim of the Friends' Meeting stood first, among many activities. He

attended it regularly every Sunday morning and evening when he was at home ; and, if he was not in London for some committee or other, he usually attended the mid-week meeting on Thursday morning as well. At these meetings he frequently spoke or offered vocal prayer, and for the later years of his life he sat at the head of the meeting. For some years he represented his Meeting on the local Free Church Council, and was brought into particularly close touch with other Free Churchmen at the time of the agitation against Mr. Balfour's Education Act. For several years he felt it right to refuse to pay his rates, and allowed his goods to be distrained upon ; but when the Liberal Government had shown its desire to meet the Passive Resisters, although the House of Lords threw out their Bill, he felt that the protest was no longer needed.

For the last few years of his life he was a useful member of the Tunbridge Wells Higher Education Sub-Committee, and he was on the Committee of the Homœopathic Hospital.

In February, 1915, he was appointed a County Magistrate ; this position he valued especially for the opportunity it gave to reduce the number of licences. From his earliest years he was a teetotaler ; and both at public functions and in private life, in all parts of the world, he would not drink anything appreciably alcoholic. After his appointment to the bench, when the annual renewal of licences came on he would visit the villages and see for himself which premises appeared specially undesirable.

Only one or two of his colleagues shared his views on this subject but his efforts met with some success.

The home interest that was nearest his heart after the Friends' Meeting itself, was the Men's Adult School held at the Meeting-House. Whenever he was at home he attended it before Sunday morning meeting and for the last few years was its president. It was never a large School. He had not the time or perhaps just the qualities to draw in large numbers of men ; but the few who attended week by week loved him as a faithful guide and friend. Another school, more in the centre of the working population, at High Brooms, was begun before the war, and J. G. Alexander often visited it on Sunday afternoons, although this involved a two-mile walk each way, and he made great efforts to raise funds to pay off the debt on the Adult School Hall.

This is not an exhaustive list of his home activities, but it serves to show that his eyes were not so much fixed on the ends of the earth that he overlooked the claims of his fellow-townsmen.

It might seem that the activities already mentioned would be enough to fill the life of any man. But J. G. Alexander's greatest efforts, after the opium victory was in sight, were directed towards the preservation of international peace, in connection both with the international " mouvement pacifiste " and with the national movement in England. This important work demands a separate chapter.

CHAPTER IX

PEACE

1889-1914.

J. G. ALEXANDER, as noted in an earlier chapter, continued to act as honorary secretary of the International Law Association until 1905, but after resigning that post he did not attend any further Congress of the Association. He felt that his work with it was done, that there were others to continue its good work, and that he must direct his energies in a rather different way.

One reason, at least, why he turned his attention about this time from the International Law Association to the International Peace Congresses was a growing consciousness that International Law was not enough. The substitution of law for force was good so far as it went, but the process was slow. Meanwhile, armaments were ever increasing, grave diplomatic crises were recurring from time to time; and these menaces could only be removed by a direct attack. They continued, not merely because of international anarchy, the absence of international law and authority, but because of a false conception of international relations.

Whilst the lawyers were drafting codes of International Law to be adopted by Governments someone must be attempting the more fundamental

task of changing the attitude of public opinion towards foreign affairs. Even some of the international lawyers themselves, though conscious of the need of international commercial and maritime regulations, still lived in an atmosphere of practically independent States, whose natural and inevitable attitude to one another must be one of rivalry and even hostility. Until this political philosophy had been exploded, no International Law could absolutely guarantee peace. It was the task of the international peace movement to convince public opinion that the political unity of man was a reality, and to rally it against the forces that threatened from time to time to dissolve this unity. With these great ends in view, and above all with the conviction that along these lines alone could the kingdom of God be established on earth, J. G. Alexander threw himself into the activities of the International Peace Congresses and allied efforts.

The first series of International Peace Congresses was held from 1843-1853. The leading men at these Congresses included such Englishmen as Richard Cobden, John Bright, Joseph Sturge and Henry Richard; Elihu Burritt was the leading American and Victor Hugo presided over the most notable Congress, which met in Paris in 1849. They were largely attended, much enthusiasm was displayed and valuable work was accomplished; but the wars in which the European Powers were engaged from the outbreak of the Crimean War, in 1854, onwards, made the holding of further Congresses impracticable, and they were not resumed for a generation.

The second series, with a permanent organisation and annual congresses, began in 1889, when a Congress was held in Paris under the Presidency of M. Frédéric Passy. J. G. Alexander took a considerable part in this congress, and in the second, held in London in 1890. During the next ten years, however, his attendance was irregular. He was at Buda Pesth in 1896 and Turin in 1898, but took little active part in the former congress, and not much more in the latter. It was the South African War, especially, that aroused him to the need of more vigorous action, national and international, in opposition to the forces of militarism; from that time onwards he hardly missed a single Congress.

The part that he took in the discussions, as shown in the printed reports, gives little indication of the extent of his activity. Here as in all his work, he was constantly in touch with new developments; he spent the time between sessions in discussing with the other leading members the best form for resolutions that were to come before the Congress; his activity as a member, and for some years as chairman, of Commission B. (International Law) was great; and in 1907 at Munich he was elected a member of the Bureau, the Executive Committee of the Congress, which met several times each year at Berne. Here, therefore, even more than in some of his other interests, it is impossible to separate his work from that of the whole organisation.

As a rule his contributions to the discussions were confined to proposing or seconding resolutions from his own Commission, dealing with arbitration

and kindred subjects ; but he was always keenly interested in some of the more controversial topics, arising under the heading of Current Events (in French, " Actualités "), the province of Commission A. These included resolutions condemning the action of various States which, from time to time, were judged by the Congress to be responsible for the outbreak of wars, or for crises that might lead to war. Thus the British Government was condemned for the Boer War, the French Government for its high-handed action in conflict with the Turks in 1902, and the Italian Government for the Tripolitan War in 1911 and 1912. It also attempted to analyse the causes of friction and to propose measures that might bring harmony, in difficult situations that arose in the Balkans, Morocco, Armenia, Crete and Venezuela, as well as in the Congo as noted in the last chapter. Sometimes one of these controversial topics brought a Peace Conference to the verge of hostilities within itself. This was specially marked in the case of the condemnation of the Tripolitan War at Geneva in 1912, when most of the Italian delegates rose up in their wrath and resisted the ruling of the chairman. But apart from the occasional infection of part of a national section with the war fever, the Congresses had, as a rule, little difficulty in arriving at a just and fair estimate of an international crisis. It cannot be said that the opinions thus expressed, or the proposals put forward, have often had immediate effect upon the solution of grave international problems. Their value has been, first,

that they have represented a considered judgment on the part of men and women experienced in affairs, imbued with an international spirit, and representing many different nations ; and, secondly, by reason of this fact, they have had an increasing influence upon public opinion and upon Governments.

Although these topics have naturally given rise to exciting and sometimes prolonged discussion, they do not represent the most important side of the work of the Congresses. In the volume of resolutions passed between 1843 and 1911, issued by the Berne Bureau in the latter year, the resolutions under the titles "*Actualités politiques*" form but a small section, which is relegated to the end. The main body of resolutions deal with "*Rapprochement fraternel des peuples*," which might be translated "*Brotherly Concord of the Peoples*." This covers a wide range of topics, including resolutions on general principles, such as the equality of States, protection of foreigners and liberty of conscience ; proposals for international federation, both for limited purposes and for general political action ; draft codes of international public law ; development of the Hague arbitration conventions ; protection of uncivilised peoples ; free trade and other economic safeguards for peace.

A further section deals with armaments, neutralisation, and kindred subjects, and a large number of resolutions are concerned with peace propaganda by means of education, the press, Labour and religion.

To most of these matters J. G. Alexander contributed in one way or another. His most notable

contributions, perhaps, were on Arbitration at the Boston Congress, in 1904, and on Federation at Stockholm, in 1910.

His discourse on Arbitration at Boston was in the main a summary of the Arbitration treaties that had been concluded between States since the signing of the Hague Conventions of 1899.

Ten such treaties had been signed, and he was glad to be able to point out that his own country, Great Britain, led the way with five of the ten. This series of treaties, he observed, "was begun by the one between Great Britain and France, which to us in the United Kingdom was a source of great rejoicing. Our two countries lie so near together. I speak," he continued, "with great feeling on the subject, for it has been my lot to spend a considerable part of my life in France, and I love the French people as truly as I love my own. These two countries in the past have often been rivals and enemies, and have inflicted on each other deadly injuries. That these two countries at last have come together is indeed cause for great rejoicing. This treaty of obligatory arbitration was followed by another series of agreements putting an end to a number of disputes which had arisen in the course of time between our two countries. There is every prospect, therefore, as far as human vision can see, that never again shall war break out between France and Great Britain."

Treaties for obligatory arbitration had also been signed by Great Britain and Germany, Great Britain and Italy, France and Italy, and several by the Scandinavian and Iberian States; but one only,

that between Denmark and the Netherlands, was a treaty without reservations.

This seemed to J. G. Alexander to be "the one model treaty," and the resolution which he proposed urged all the Governments that were parties to the Hague Convention to follow this lead, and to refer all disputes not settled by diplomacy to the Hague Court of Arbitration. He especially emphasised the distinction between obligatory and compulsory arbitration. "The word 'obligatory' simply means that the powers bind themselves to refer all cases—or certain classes of cases—to arbitration, and it does not mean that compulsion is to be brought to bear upon them by some outside force. This Congress has always declined to sanction that idea."

When the Congress met in London in 1908, J. G. Alexander was appointed Chairman. Lord Courtney was president, but only presided over one or two sessions. Other Congresses had received Government recognition, especially in France; but the London Congress was shown higher favour than any that had met before. King Edward received a deputation, of which J. G. Alexander was naturally a member, and in reply to the address of the Congress, made a notable pronouncement in favour of peace. Mr. Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, addressed a great public meeting in the Queen's Hall, and Mr. Asquith, as Prime Minister, spoke at a Government banquet at the Hotel Cecil. Greetings came from distinguished men and societies; and the Lambeth Conference of Anglican Bishops sent a deputation to greet the Congress in person. There

are dangers in such general approbation. The Congress was not quite sure what to make of a greeting in which Mr. Balfour spoke of "the efficient maintenance of defensive armaments" as one of the things which promote peace; and the declaration of the Bishop of Perth (Western Australia) that universal military service would check newspaper panics caused the Chairman of the Congress recurrent trouble in the days that followed, from delegates, with whom, of course, he fully agreed, who wanted a public protest. But in spite of this and other difficulties that arose he piloted the Congress safely through. In the first sessions there was so much discussion, so many proposals and counter-proposals, that it seemed as though no effective business would be done. But the Chairman's policy of allowing a fair amount of rope at first was justified. The Congress pulled itself together in time and a number of important resolutions were approved, on limitation of armaments, obligatory arbitration, international political organisation, inter-governmental conference on education, capture of private property at sea, Morocco and other matters. Nor were these resolutions in any way toned down to meet the views of those who had patronised the Congress. Carl Heath, former secretary of the National Peace Council, observes, "I have recently been through the Report of the Congress in detail and have again been struck by J. G. Alexander's combination of constant and effective work with an extraordinary unobtrusiveness."

His paper contributed to the Stockholm Congress in 1910 was a further development of the all-important

subject of international political organisation. This paper, combining concise analysis of International Federation with some proposals for further development, may perhaps be regarded as his most notable contribution to the literature of international peace.

“By federation,” he writes, “we mean such a juridical union between independent states, as shall provide peaceful and rational methods of settling all questions arising out of their mutual relations, eliminating every occasion for resort to brute force, but not interfering with their autonomy.” This is the ultimate goal of all pacifist effort.

Then he gives examples of federation taken from modern history—the Swiss Federation, the United States of America, the Germanic Confederation leading to the German Empire, the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary, and the autonomous states of the British Empire—not itself strictly federal but containing within it the federations of Canada, Australia and South Africa.

Taking these in turn, he notes certain characteristics: the Swiss and American federations are composed of republics each of which possesses representative assemblies and its own government; Germany shows how a fiscal union may be the stepping-stone to federation; Austria-Hungary how various degrees of autonomy may be needed in order to maintain the cohesion and stability of the structure; the British Empire how the granting of self-government produces loyalty to the mother country. At this point he digresses in order to pay

a tribute to the statesmanship of "that great pacifist," Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman for his courageous grant of self-government to South Africa. "Does it not suggest," he adds, "the true solution of the problem of Alsace-Lorraine?" by which all danger of a new war between France and Germany might be dispelled.

He gives two further essential conditions for a successful federation. The first is popular control over the Government in each of the federated States: this will save the federation from being undermined by dynastic ambition, or by the interests of a military aristocracy or an ecclesiastical organisation, or of financiers or capitalists. The second condition is that the peoples federated should love peace and concord, justice and equity. For this they must have sufficient knowledge and education to be able to withstand the interested agitations of the militarist press. It is the duty of pacifists to encourage and to inculcate such sentiments and knowledge.

Turning to what has been already achieved, he notes that the first elements of International Federation already exist and that they have been created almost without perception of their import. First there are the numerous International Congresses, of which M. La Fontaine had given the Congress an imposing enumeration two years before, those in which Governments were represented being specially important. Secondly, there are International Unions (postal, telegraphic, railway, weights and measures, industrial property and others). Thirdly, the Hague Arbitration Court and the International Prize

Court—the latter, however, of little ultimate value, as it only functions in war-time. Finally, the Hague Conferences. And besides these beginnings, two other precedents are of importance : first, the Inter-parliamentary Union ; but, J. G. Alexander adds, “ I confess that I do not see how this association is to become part of a formal federation without losing the voluntary character which appears to me an essential factor of its usefulness.” There is also the Bureau of the Pan-American Union, which might serve as a precedent for a further step towards European federation.

Finally he suggests that the federation of adjacent States, such as the Scandinavian countries, Holland and Belgium, and the Balkan States, might be a step in the direction of a wider union. And the entry of Germany into the Franco-British entente would, he concludes, be the best guarantee, at least as far as Western Europe is concerned, against war. “ May we see the realisation of this happy event.”

His conclusions, in the form of resolutions submitted to, and approved by, the Congress, were as follows :

“ Whilst it is impossible to foresee the precise mode in which the federation of the world will be brought about, it is the duty of pacifists to keep before them this ideal as the ultimate goal of their efforts and the definite means by which universal peace can be assured.

“ Meanwhile, they should seek to promote and develop all partial approximations to this ideal, such as :

“(a) International unions (postal, railway, industrial property, etc.)

“(b) International Courts of Arbitration and Arbitral Justice.

“(c) Federations of neighbouring States including Customs Unions.

“(d) The regularisation and consolidation of the Hague Peace Conferences.”

In the light of subsequent events it may be objected that this paper is unduly hopeful in tone, and ignores the dangers that threatened the peace of the world. But this is not quite a fair criticism. J. G. Alexander was by no means blind to the dangers. It was just because he was so keenly alive to them that he laboured hard to strengthen the forces working for peace. He acted in the belief that constant warnings of danger drive people either to acquiesce fatalistically in what they suppose to be inevitable, or else to support a policy of feverish military activity as urged by Lord Roberts and his associates. He wished, rather, to draw public attention to the signs of a growing international spirit ; to show the people of each nation that those of other nations were, not merely in ideal, but increasingly in fact, their friends and fellow-workers. Direct the public mind towards these hopeful developments, he argued, and international confidence, accompanied by further federal union, would ensue.

It is not necessary to refer in any detail to other aspects of J. G. Alexander's work for peace. He was an active member of the Peace Society and

of the Peace Committee of the Society of Friends ; he attended various National Peace Congresses in England and Scotland, and helped his friend, T. P. Newman, to organise the National Peace Council—a body formed in 1905 to co-ordinate the many associations in Britain that were interested in promoting peace. He received most of the periodicals and other publications devoted to the peace cause that were issued in the English and French languages ; he also read and assimilated a large portion of their contents. He took part in the Universal Races Congress that met in London in 1911.

In the last years preceding the war the International Peace Congresses devoted much time, and the Berne Bureau and the Commissions laboured strenuously, in the preparations of peaceful legislation for the Third Hague Conference, due to meet in 1915. They urged the dilatory governments to appoint delegates and commissions of preparation in good time, and a committee, of which J. G. Alexander was a member, and M. Emile Arnaud president and draftsman, presented a code of International Public Law to the Congress in 1910, to be laid before the Governments and their Commissions. Further work of preparation and propaganda filled the following years.

After the Agadir crisis in 1911, J. G. Alexander was more alive than ever to the need of promoting Anglo-German friendship. He took part in the effort to foster goodwill through the Churches, and was present at the Anglo-German Understanding

Congress in London in 1912, when distinguished men—not only churchmen—of the two nations made a great effort to find solutions of colonial difficulties and of the problem of the capture of private property at sea in time of war, which stood in the way of reduction of naval armaments. In 1913 and again in 1914 he accompanied two members of Parliament, Messrs. W. H. Dickinson and J. Allen Baker, to Paris in order to bring the leaders of the French churches into the movement. A Congress of delegates from the churches of all the affiliated national groups was called to meet at Constance in the first days of August, 1914, and J. G. Alexander was hoping to attend it. When the Austrian ultimatum was presented to Serbia the Berne Bureau was summoned to meet immediately in Brussels, and there, at the end of July, the representatives from the great countries on the verge of the conflict united in calling upon President Wilson to mediate. J. G. Alexander was about to start from Brussels for Constance, but was told that he could not get beyond Luxemburg owing to the mobilisation of troops, and accordingly he returned home.

CHAPTER X

WAR-TIME

1914-18

THE extent to which the calamity of the war affected J. G. Alexander's inmost being, both at the time of the crisis and in the years that followed, cannot be known even to those who were nearest to him. He had never lived in a fool's paradise ; he knew that the nations were armed for war, and that men and nations were still liable to be overcome by jealousy and enmity. The Balkan wars and the Agadir crisis had shown how much inflammable material there was in the world ; and a few months before the war he had quoted the opinion of a continental pacifist that there could not be a stable peace in Europe until Poland and Alsace-Lorraine had been emancipated. But the calamity was no less severe to him because it was not wholly unexpected.

He did not hesitate to condemn the action of Austria in refusing the Serbian offer to submit the one outstanding point of her ultimatum to arbitration, and the action of Germany in refusing Sir Edward Grey's offer of a Conference. Throughout the Congo Reform campaign he had respected Grey as an honest and high-minded man struggling against great obstacles of personnel and tradition ;

and he still held the same view to the end. Even more intense was his indignation at the German invasion of Belgium ; and publicly, as well as privately, he expressed his condemnation of the Central Powers. But he believed that the Christian way of meeting armed force was a better way than that of armed resistance. A Christian nation should never be armed ; and though his own nation, having armed itself for war, might seem to have no alternative but to fight, he, who had always urged disarmament, could not feel himself bound to support his nation in its action.

This does not mean that he washed his hands of the affair. Quite the reverse. The nations had indeed plunged into the war from which he and others had striven to save them. He still believed, however, that they might be saved, even at this twelfth hour, if they would listen to the pure Christian gospel. It was for him and those who shared his convictions to uphold the standard of reason and justice amid the rising passion of hatred ; still more, it was theirs to promote the spirit of reconciliation and to explore the possibilities of negotiation.

He threw himself with energy into the various efforts to reach a sane and speedy settlement. Some of this work was in connection with the Friends' Peace Committee, some of it with the National Peace Council. The latter body was seriously divided in opinion. During the first winter of the war those who supported the action of the Government brought forward a declaration condemning the acts of the Austrian and German Governments in violation of

International Law. J. G. Alexander felt bound to support this resolution ; but further than this he would not go. And in general, for a couple of years, the National Peace Council was incapable of much effective action.

This fact led J. G. Alexander to look for other openings. After some correspondence with Mr. Lowes Dickinson he joined a group of men, commonly known as " the Bryce group," in drafting proposals for the prevention of future wars. These proposals, perhaps more definitely than anything else, led to the League of Nations movement in America. This work was in many ways similar to the proposals J. G. Alexander had helped to elaborate in earlier years in connection with the International Peace Congresses and the International Law Association ; but for all that he did not feel able to do much detailed work, or to offer much criticism beyond supporting Mr. Arthur Ponsonby's objection to military sanctions. In March, 1915, he wrote to his youngest son that he was " feeling . . . altogether out of date and very helpless in the cause of peace at present."

But however difficult he felt it to think out concrete proposals for promoting or establishing peace, he continued a work of no less value, that of keeping the peace between pacifists of different schools and nations. In January, 1915, he attended a meeting of the International Peace Bureau, at Berne, where German and British delegates met together. It did not lead to much ; and the French members would have nothing to do with it. They felt that all peace

discussion was out of the question whilst the enemy was upon their soil, and were inclined to regard English pacifists as traitors to the common cause. To them the duty of defence was paramount. Some of them had raised the question at Congresses before the war, and had almost split one Congress at least, in their effort to pass a declaration avowing the duty of patriotic defence. J. G. Alexander had been largely instrumental in avoiding such a split, and now, under far more difficult circumstances, he essayed the same rôle. He quickly perceived the danger of alienation between English and French pacifists, and sought to keep the gulf bridged. Not only did he go to see Romain Rolland in Geneva, and Jean Longuet and others in Paris ; but he also conferred with all his old friends and colleagues of the Société de la Paix par le Droit, most of whom condemned Rolland as worse than an English pacifist, and the Minority Socialists as revolutionary traitors.

In view of the paralysis of the National Peace Council, J. G. Alexander supported the proposal initiated in the Friends' Yearly Meeting of 1915 to call a conference of peace workers in England to co-ordinate the forces working for peace. The so-called "Co-ordination Group," an informal and unofficial periodic gathering of workers from various pacifist and labour organisations, followed the conference called by the Yearly Meeting, and J. G. Alexander felt more satisfied with the way things were going. A re-organisation of the National Peace Council was being projected, and the Co-ordination Group could carry on meanwhile.

The Peace Society was also divided, and a new Christian organisation, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, came into existence, with a wider and deeper aim than that of the Peace Society, and J. G. Alexander was an active member of its international committee.

In July and August, 1915, he was in Paris again, conferring with pacifist leaders and with the organisers of the McAll mission and other Protestant and Missionary leaders, who had grave difficulties to contend with. From Paris he went to visit and encourage his friend Charles Terrell, at Paimpol, and on his way home visited the little Quaker community in the Channel Islands. He travelled from Paris to Paimpol all the way round by Nantes in order to confer with Professor Ruysen, of Bordeaux, one of the most understanding leaders of French pacifism. In the course of this journey he had times of deep fellowship with the Krüger family and others of his French friends who had already been stricken by the war. Travelling was becoming increasingly difficult ; and at least one British official, when he landed at Havre, was very brusque with him, saying that it was he and such as he who had brought this calamity on the world. Such taunts did not move him. But the agony through which the French nation was passing moved him deeply. He felt that in spite of all difficulties he must try to bring spiritual succour to those for whom he had so long laboured.

On his return to England he obtained from the Meeting for Sufferings a minute of liberation to visit once again the south of France and the Vaudois

valleys, with a message of Christian comfort and encouragement. He explained the object of his journey in a letter to his third son, Christopher, who had been for some years in Rome, as a rédacteur in the International Institute of Agriculture. " You speak of the possibility (or impossibility) of my holding peace meetings. You may be re-assured on that point ; I have no such thought. If I go to the Vaudois Valleys, it will only be with a view to religious meetings. . . What I have in view is simply to carry a message of comfort and sympathy and encouragement to fellow-Christians in France and the Vaudois Valleys in these trying times, seeking to share with them the comfort I find myself and which sustains me through all the desolation of this awful conflict, in the conviction that once again we are witnessing the preparation through anguish and agony for a better world and especially a better Europe. Our Lord's words with regard to the fall of Jerusalem and break-up of the Jewish nation, come to me again and again as applicable to the present crisis—not in any literal sense, but in their broad meaning—' When these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads ; because your redemption draweth nigh.' "

Accompanied by Charles Terrell he spent some weeks visiting the old familiar places and friends—including all the Quakers—in central and southern France, and there were abundant signs that their visit brought light to many, especially to those in later life, who found themselves plunged into this darkness, after bearing the burden and heat of the

day. It was with astonishment that the French officer at the Italian frontier learnt that J. G. Alexander had travelled for weeks up and down the country without let or hindrance from any official. After hearing his story the officer was much impressed, and made easy the continuance of his journey into Italy. There he was joined by his son, Christopher, from Rome for a week, and by his youngest son, Horace, from England. He was welcomed as an old friend by the leaders of the Vaudois Church, and found great readiness for the receipt of his message. At one service especially he spoke with an eloquence and conviction that he perhaps never achieved when speaking in English. He took for text a passage in Ezekiel xlvii., which had become very vivid to him since his visit to Palestine and the Dead Sea. The prophet sees a desert valley where all is dried up, except for a lake that has become so salt that every stream flowing into it is turned bitter, and every fish and other creature has died. And then, as if by a miracle, fountains of fresh water burst out into the valley, the lake becomes fresh again, life returns, and the hillside becomes green and fragrant. Our world is to-day like that valley of death ; and the streams of living water are the living gospel of Christ, transforming our lives and bringing fragrance into our relations with our fellow-men, and into the relations of classes and nations. It is through us and through our self-sacrifice for one another, that the fountains must burst forth, bringing fresh life out of this death.

Before starting home for Christmas, J. G. Alexander was able also to meet an Italian pacifist colleague, and to show him some of the projects of peace that were being evolved in England.

In Paris a private conference was arranged by some of the pacifist leaders with several French publicists, where a very frank and useful interchange of views took place on certain issues that seemed likely to create a division between the two countries, especially the true solution of the Alsatian problem and the ultimate disposal of the German Colonies. The British Government was becoming strict about passports, and only J. G. Alexander and his son were there to express the English view ; the American organiser of the World Alliance of the Churches also participated, and was impressed with the moderate and conciliatory tone prevailing throughout the discussion—only possible of course in a strictly private meeting.

At this time none of J. G. Alexander's four sons had been under obligation, or had felt it right, to enlist for the war. The eldest, Gilbert, who was in Canada, and the youngest, who alone was in England, shared his conviction that it would be wrong to do so. The second son, Wilfrid, was in Australia, engaged during most of the war on government work for science and industry ; the third, in Rome, offered himself for the Italian army, but was rejected on health grounds. In February, 1916, he returned home and enlisted as a private. It was a grief to his father that he should see this as the path of duty ; but he loved him all the more for doing what he

thought right, even when it clashed with the convictions of his parents. Already he had had to face the realisation that some of his deepest convictions were no longer shared by one or another of his sons.

During the first years of the war some of the French Protestant leaders felt that a great opportunity was coming for Protestant unity in France and for a fresh campaign of Christian evangelisation on their part; they seemed to feel, too, that J. G. Alexander could help to infuse a certain Quaker spirit that was needed if such a work were to be of the greatest value, and he, too, believed that France, after the war, would be ready for such a message as members of the Society of Friends, in co-operation with sympathetic Frenchmen, might give. He and another Friend, A. K. Brown, were able to pay a short visit to Paris and other places early in 1916, to confer with the French leaders, and explore the ground, and they then obtained a further minute from the Meeting for Sufferings for a more prolonged visit. But the terrible Somme campaign was beginning, no civilians were allowed to cross the Channel, the French and British Government officials were not favourable to such side-tracking of the national mind, and J. G. Alexander did not visit France again.

After the passing of the Military Service Act of 1916 he gave a great deal of time to helping conscientious objectors. He visited isolated men scattered about the rural parts of Kent and Sussex, or attended when their claims for exemption were heard

by the Tribunals and later at Courts-martial. When the men who had received insufficient exemption were in prison he offered to serve as a "Quaker Chaplain," and for the rest of his life, until his last illness, went regularly to Maidstone gaol once a fortnight to see the men who had applied for a Quaker chaplain, talking with each individually in his cell, or meeting all together for united worship.

At the Allied Economic Conference in Paris, in August, 1916, the representative of Japan was a vice-president of the Japanese Peace Society, Baron Sakatani, whom J. G. Alexander had met in Japan. Before leaving Japan, the Baron had assured his Society that he would make a point of meeting with peace workers in Europe. J. G. Alexander took him at his word, and, when he was in London after the Conference, arranged for him to meet several of the leading English pacifists, including Messrs. J. A. Hobson, C. R. Buxton and G. Lowes Dickinson. The Baron seemed rather astonished at the way in which the Paris resolutions were regarded, and he was not able to give any reassuring answer to the questions pressed upon him as to Japan's relationship with China.

The autumn of 1916 saw J. G. Alexander again adopting the rôle of conciliator, and also of practical international statesman, at a special conference of peace workers called by the Friends' Peace Committee to discuss the vexed question of "sanctions," which was causing estrangement and division among the pioneers of a league of nations. In the conference

it appeared that those who objected to the proposal of armed sanction had no concrete counter-proposal. Accordingly a group prepared a pamphlet on "The Community of Nations," and J. G. Alexander assisted. He explained his ideas on the subject in some letters written during the autumn. "It seems to me that the right alternative to a 'League to Enforce Peace' will be a League to *prevent war*, and that instead of the leagued states binding themselves to make war on a state that does not observe the moratorium, they should pledge themselves to prohibit all loans of money and all exports of munitions of war or materials therefor to such a nation. . . . This, it seems to me, would be a very effective 'pacific sanction,' and it also seems to me far more likely that great States would be willing to pledge themselves to a measure of this kind than to armed intervention." A few days later, "I distinguish clearly between the boycott, a measure which I think may possibly be useful in certain cases, but which can by no means be generalised in application, and the prohibition of loans, export of munitions and materials for munitions. These could at once be prohibited by proclamation in each State, forming part of, or appended to, the usual proclamation of neutrality." "My final point is that this proposal would be in harmony with, instead of putting a definite limit to, the progressive and simultaneous disarmament for which the peoples will be longing when this war is once over." Finally he writes in December, "I cannot think there is much or any use in advocating . . . the 'martyr

nation' policy—it presupposes a truly Christian nation, for although I know it has been suggested in France by non-Christians, I cannot conceive its being carried out except by a truly Christianised people. But the ideal of concurrent and progressive reduction of armaments is one that must surely appeal to everybody except the thorough-going militarists, and would therefore, I cannot but hope, tend to unite pacifists of all shades."

Before the end of 1916 the National Peace Council was re-formed, cutting its connection with certain organisations that supported the Government's policy and including amongst its constituent bodies those that had come into being during the war, such as the Union of Democratic Control and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. J. G. Alexander was appointed chairman of the new Council, and presided over the opening session of the National Congress held in London at the end of January, 1917.

During the early part of the winter his hopes of a settlement rose a good deal, especially after the German peace offer in December. But the refusal of the Allies to enter into negotiations, and the failure of President Wilson's last efforts to mediate between the warring nations, were followed by the unrestricted U-boat war and fresh offensives on the Western front. So the hope of peace was dashed once more. To J. G. Alexander, too, the revelation of brutalities committed in the repression of a demonstration in Ceylon was an added burden of sorrow during these months.

But as gloom settled again upon the world he

found cause to rejoice over at least one great victory for righteousness. The Chinese Government agreed to buy the final two thousand chests of Indian opium lying at the ports, "for medical use," in order to end the Indo-Chinese trade by the 31st March, 1917; and on the 19th April, a final meeting of the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade was held, to wind up the Society and to celebrate the victory that had crowned the labour of half a century. Already, in April, 1915, J. G. Alexander had ceased to edit the *Friend of China*, and the Society had made a presentation to him in recognition of his "untiring services over the long period of twenty-five years." Now he edited a final number of the magazine, under the joyful title, "A Victory for Righteousness." Only the Committee was continued to watch the carrying out of the Hague Opium Convention. Unhappily the lawless turmoil of civil war gave renewed opportunity for illicit opium growth in many parts of China, in 1918. A Chinese wrote that he was glad J. G. Alexander was not alive to see this renewal of poppy culture. But even though his labours had not in this respect obtained their full reward, he had at least seen the end of the Indo-Chinese trade against which he had fought because it was a moral disgrace to his country.

After the American entry into the war J. G. Alexander looked to the leaders of the Churches as the right people "to take up the negotiation so hopefully begun by President Wilson," and as early as March, 1917, he drafted a letter to the Archbishop of

Canterbury, and other leaders in the National and Free Churches.

The Friends' Yearly Meeting, in May, 1917, issued a message "To All Men," advocating a Christian way to peace. This was very widely circulated and published either as news or as an advertisement in newspapers in many countries. The correspondence resulting from it led to the formation of a committee to promote an international Christian conference, and on this committee J. G. Alexander served.

During the summer his son, Christopher, who had been invalided home from France with a broken leg, was in camp at Shoreham, and J. G. Alexander and his wife spent some time at Worthing. But he would never be persuaded to take quite as much holiday as his doctor urged, and he was soon back at his home and London activities—continuing his ceaseless correspondence with Christian and pacifist workers at home and abroad, and his personal efforts to sustain the men in prison and others with whom life and the war were dealing hardly. Letters written by him at this time show that he was still as much alive as ever to each new development, whether in connection with the possibilities of peace or with questions arising out of the war—the future of Africa and other matters. On the third anniversary of the outbreak of war he attended a meeting arranged by the Tunbridge Wells Free Church Council. "There were few things which jarred . . . I felt it good to unite thus far with Christians of other denominations."

So passed his last autumn, the strain of all his activities evidently telling on his strength. To a superficial observer he carried his sixty-nine years well ; but such strength as he had, under the strenuous conditions of his life, could not have the fullest chance of combatting disease. Sometimes, after returning from London committees, he had to spend a day or two in bed.

After his death some of his fellow-members of Tunbridge Wells Meeting wrote, " During the last few months of his attendance at their meeting, his fellow-worshippers were sensible of a deeper note of assured confidence in the ultimate triumph of Truth and Love, coupled with a growing trust in the Heavenly Father's care for and sympathy with each individual child of His."

After the beginning of October no further news came from his son, Christopher, now again in France, and as the silent weeks passed and hope grew less, the anxiety told still more on his health. In the middle of December news came of Christopher's death more than two months before. A few days later J. G. Alexander was again at Maidstone, meeting the men in prison ; he soon realised that they had heard of his loss and that they were now trying to minister to his need ; and the beauty of their thought for him broke through his self-control. Christmas-time was made more cheerful amidst the sorrow by a visit from Olive Graham, to whom Horace had become engaged in September, and who brought comfort and happiness to J. G. Alexander and all the family. Still he worked on. He celebrated the New Year

by announcing to a remonstrating family that he had found he could fit in a Kent Adult School Committee, attendance at the Quarter Sessions at Maidstone, and his visit to the men in prison in one day, and get to London for his monthly committees in good time.

A fortnight later he was to meet some Basuto chiefs in London and take them to the Zoo. But he was suddenly prostrated by severe pain. After two or three days of great suffering, an operation was performed at the Tunbridge Wells Homœopathic Hospital, where he remained for several weeks, apparently slowly mending. On the 14th February, he was moved home, but his strength did not increase, and it soon became plain that his life could not last long. He said that he had no wish to live if he could not work. When asked by his old doctor, who came to see him on the last day of his life, how he felt, he replied, "I wish to lie passive in God's hand and know no will but His." And so he embarked on life's last adventure in peace. For his last twelve days at home he had, besides the care of two nurses, the tender ministrations of his beloved wife and of their dear helper and companion, Lilius Clark. These two and his eldest son, Gilbert, were with him when early in the morning of the 26th February, 1918, the beating of his heart ceased.

The keen, snow-laden north-east wind swept over the Sussex pine-woods four days later whilst his brother Samuel, at the grave-side, recalled his early consecration to the service of Jesus Christ. Afterwards in the Friends' Meeting House, which his spirit

had so often helped to bless, some who had shared in his public labours told how he had kept in later life the faith of his youth. His seventy years had been lived to the full, and those who met to commemorate the completion of his life on earth could readily echo the words, "Servant of God, well done."

CHAPTER XI

EPILOGUE

"It has been said, and it is a true saying," writes J. G. Alexander's friend and colleague, Carl Heath, until recently Secretary of the National Peace Council, "that to know a man even intimately in connection with some profession, trade, or public cause in which he is interested, is not necessarily to know the real man at all. But though sometimes very true, it is I think rarely so in the case of a man whose life has a central purpose and inspiration. Such a purpose and inspiration belonged to Joseph Gundry Alexander. Whatever may have been the case in earlier years when I did not personally know him, the last ten years of his life were lived as a whole, round a central idea of service and a sense of daily inspiration in the power and life of Jesus Christ. Thus his attitude towards the international peace question, held with great tenacity and with a clear vision, fruit of his wide knowledge of international law, of travel and of language, was at all times very far from fanaticism or sentimentalism in any shape or form. He had no over self-confidence. Indeed, he was often doubtful of himself, and at times troubled his friends by a certain apparent inability to make up his mind. But his judgments were simple and straightforward when he saw clearly the right course. And even then they were always conciliatory and very obviously disinterested.

“ This disinterestedness was a very marked trait. As one of the few English pacifists who could not only talk French fluently, but could also speak fluently and with conviction from the platform, he could always have occupied a premier place. But his quiet and unassuming nature forbade. Nevertheless, I can the more readily affirm, speaking with an intimate knowledge of the European movement in the last decade, few, if any, commanded a more genuine and affectionate respect.

“ During the years of our friendship this small opinion of his own merits was often displayed. But though he would often propose to give way to less valuable and less experienced colleagues, he never allowed his innate humility of soul to excuse him from a service he felt called upon to render. Thus only a few weeks before his death, and when obviously to his closer friends his strength was failing, he consented to take the chair at a long and important meeting of the National Peace Council.

“ Joseph Alexander's pacifism was of very deep root. In thinking of him I think of one who was naturally gentle, courteous, and humane. I think also of one whose mind was well-stored and orderly, who saw in law the divine purpose seeking expression. I think of one who hated oppression and loved his fellowmen. But I think chiefly of one who saw in Jesus Christ the vision of the love of God made manifest in man. He gave his whole being to the service of that vision, his whole mind to the problems that, wrongly handled, bring such suffering and injustice on the common man, and that find their

solution in faithfulness to the teaching of the Son of Man; and his whole heart to the love of God in Christ."

Elsewhere the same writer, alluding to J. G. Alexander's deep religious sense, writes, "The strength of this made him very courageous, where his temperament naturally would have made him timid. In a body of men of many nationalities and nearly all hostile to Christianity, I have heard him state the basis of his religious faith with the utmost simplicity and directness, winning an immediate response of personal affection and respect."

A conversation J. G. Alexander had in Paris at the beginning of November, 1915, with two leading French pacifists, shows how far he had learnt to extend the conception of "the unity of all believers." "Towards the close of our conversation something led me to ask Mme. Puech, who is a Protestant, whether she had been to hear M. Raoul Allier [a noted Protestant pastor, quoted in an earlier chapter]. She said 'No'—since the war everything religious had been repugnant to her. M. Richet said he fell back on paganism—Lucretius and Marcus Aurelius. I said I fell back on Christ. Mme. P. said I was happy in having such faith. M. Richet spoke of 'la faillite du Christianisme'—I said it was because it had gone so far from Christ. It seemed new to him that for the first two centuries Christians would not fight, and I told him of Celsus saying that they were useless to the Empire, and Origen's reply that they did more to defend the Empire by their prayers than soldiers by

* "The bankruptcy of Christianity."

their wars. As we parted, he said, 'Au fond nous sommes tous de la même religion,'* which reminded me, and I told him of Wm. Penn's saying (is it not ?) that all good men are of the same religion."

A French colleague in both pacifist and evangelistic endeavours, Jacques Dumas, recalls : " En 1912, à Genève Charles Richet donnait, un soir, une grande conférence dans l'amphithéâtre de l'Université. Voltairien, railleur, protagoniste de la plus libre des libres pensées, Charles Richet se donnait comme affranchi de tous les dogmes auxquels Joseph Alexander tenait autant qu'à la vie. A la fin de la conférence, j'ouvris les yeux : Charles Richet et Joseph Alexander étaient dans les bras l'un de l'autre, s'embrassant avec effusion. Soyez sûrs que Joseph Alexander eût embrassé Voltaire. Il eût embrassé Judas et l'eût ramené à lui par la puissance de son fraternel amour."†

Beside the cutting of " La Paix par le Droit " from which this memory is taken lies the card of " Charles Richet, Professeur à la Faculté de Médecine de Paris, Membre de l'Institut," with these words written on the back, " Avec toute ma douloureuse sympathie. Je n'ai jamais connu d'âme plus haute

* " At heart we are all of the same religion."

† " In 1912, at Geneva, Charles Richet, one evening, made an important speech in the University lecture hall. Voltairian, scoffer, protagonist of the freest of free thought, Charles Richet spoke as one emancipated from all the beliefs that Joseph Alexander held as tenaciously as life itself. At the end of the meeting I looked up ; Charles Richet and Joseph Alexander were together greeting each other with the utmost cordiality. We may be sure that Joseph Alexander would have loved Voltaire. He would have loved Judas and would have drawn him to himself by the power of his brotherly love."

et d'esprit plus loyal et généreux que J. G. Alexander."*

One of his French pacifist colleagues, Théodore Ruysen, looking back over a long term of years, writes, "Voilà vingt ans que nous luttons en commun pour la paix et la justice. Dans ces luttes je l'ai toujours trouvé au premier rang, donnant à tous l'exemple d'une conscience droite, d'une intelligence claire, d'une courtoisie parfaite."†

It is hard not to go on quoting these French estimates, from journals and private letters; their insight is so deep, their estimate so just, their tone so much more beautiful than any Englishman can achieve.

It was not from France alone that these voices came. From Holland, Denmark, Switzerland and remoter countries his old comrades sent their tribute. Of the Chinese testimonies one at least must be given here, a leader from the *Peking Daily News*, of 9th March, 1918. It is anonymous, but it seems to have been written by his friend and comrade-in-arms against the opium traffic, Dr. Wu Lien Teh:

"The world can ill spare such a man as was Joseph Gundry Alexander, and it cannot afford under any circumstances to forget such a one. Such as he are the salt of the earth, keeping their times pure

* "With my deepest sympathy. I have never known a more high-minded or a more loyal and generous spirit than J. G. Alexander."

† "For twenty years we have fought together for peace and justice. In this battle I have always found him in the front rank, giving to all an example of integrity, of clear good sense and of perfect courtesy."

and their fellows whole and sane when all the current forces are against wholesomeness and sanity. Yet there has been for the past three and a half years such a long tale of the honoured dead that the world is apt to forget those who in the days and ways of peace strove with might and main to make the world a better place for their having lived in it ; and when these strivers have been men of retiring disposition, seeking not their own, but pursuing the path of right without requiring that their deeds should be trumpeted throughout the world, the danger lest they should be forgotten is all the greater. Yet they must not be forgotten.

“ The services that Joseph Gundry Alexander rendered to China were great, and all the greater since they were not designed for advertisement. . . . [Here follows an outline of his work for the Society for the Suppression of the Opium Trade.] . . .

“ Mr. Alexander had possessed his soul in infinite patience, he had been tenacious of purpose, and at all times he had persistently refused to compromise the position that from the beginning the Society, of which he was secretary, had taken up. He was duly grateful for half-loaves, but he never regarded them as representing finality ; and his faith in the complete invincibility of his cause carried it to victory. He himself would be the last to suggest that he or the Society whose interests were so dear to his heart had abolished the opium traffic, but the onlooker who sees so much of the game, knows that he and the Society kept public opinion informed, kept the issue alive, and never lost an opportunity of bringing the issue,

whether in its main or in its minor phases, before successive Governments ; and so, when the time was ripe, public opinion was ready formed, and the British Government could act in consonance with it and with its full support.

“ The abolition of the opium traffic needed the joint efforts of two sets of authorities, the Chinese as well as the British. The Chinese authorities had grown apathetic, until the closing years of the Empire, when Yuan Shih-k'ai had the wisdom to use his great influence at court to urge the suppression of the traffic as far as possible, and was able to convince the British authorities of Chinese sincerity in the matter. There can be little question that had Mr. Alexander and his associates in England ever slackened their activities, allowed the subject to become a dead issue, and acquiesced in the then existing state of things, no amount of sincerity on the part of the Chinese Government would have availed to bring about the end of the traffic in ten years from the beginning of the new movement in China. The work that Mr. Alexander and his associates did kept the issue alive in both countries, convincing the Chinese authorities that they would have strong moral backing in Britain, and thus encouraging them to take the steps they did take, and, at the same time, educating public opinion in Britain in an admirable way.

“ Now that Mr. Alexander has passed away it is fitting that his name be not forgotten in the land for which he did so much, that at least these words of appreciation should be spoken, and that the tribute

he himself would most have appreciated, a determination to rid the land of other vices the indulgence in which can only result in the hindrance of progress and the postponement of the day of real freedom, be offered to his memory. . . . He placed his whole powers at the disposal of the Anti-Opium cause with a faithfulness only equalled by his modesty, and with high ability only equalled by his zeal ; and were it not that the lives of such men are an inspiration the world would be much poorer by his passing."

Such a determination as is here demanded has, in fact, found tangible expression in West China, where his name, together with that of a fellow Quaker and pacifist, an old American colleague on many fields of action, Benjamin F. Trueblood, has been associated with the foundation of an International Women's Institute at Chungking. Here, it is hoped, many of the women of China may be freed from the ignorance and oppression which has been the lot of their sex in the past.

One other memorial to his memory, at Tunbridge Wells, is no less fitting in character than this. A fund was raised for paying off the debt on the High Brooms Adult School Hall. The way in which he had endeared himself to those working men of his own town who knew him, is expressed in the words of the honorary secretary of the Tunbridge Wells School, who wrote of "his loving-kindness and humility, bearing and forbearing with all of us."

This humility, so generally noted by his friends, was not so apparent in his earlier life. It was one of those good fruits of the Spirit that mature with

years of patient effort. Even in later life he had none of the false humility that tries to belittle success. His honesty was so frank that he sometimes told of things he had done with no thought of what those who heard might think of him for letting it be known. All he had done was in the path of duty ; and if he had achieved some notable success he was profoundly glad of it, though he claimed no glory for himself. Shy he sometimes seemed, especially in the company of those whose outlook on life is commonly called worldly, but self-conscious he never was. He was as easy to photograph as he was to please.

With this simple candour he combined, what one of his brothers-in-law singled out as a marked characteristic, an extraordinary control of his temper and tongue. Probably not one of his sons ever heard a hasty word that could hurt anyone pass his lips. He never gave rein to the strong impulse to score a point off an adversary, or to sparkle by some easy biting quip. He brought healing to many, pain to none.

A few last words must be permitted from two others of his fellow-countrymen. Both extracts are from letters of Members of Parliament who were associated with him in anti-opium work. " We had a great respect for him. His eye was single, and his heart was pure. Some of us—politicians—live in a world of compromise, and it is good for us to meet men to whom the good they see is absolute."

" Your husband (I will not say *was* but) *is* one of the *noblest men* I ever knew. My own life covers nearly as long a span as his has done and I can truly

say I never met a more unselfish, pure-minded, humble, genuine Christian man. Of him it was emphatically true, as A. L. Waring wrote in her hymn, that he was 'content to fill a little space if Christ be glorified.' He never sought the praise of men, but he has had I am sure much more than that, the deep and abiding gratitude and appreciation of those who knew him, and the best appreciation of all—'the Master praises, what are men?' "

The words from the prophet Malachi, chosen by his wife for his memorial card, seem to sum up the whole :—

"The law of truth was in his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found in his lips : he walked with me in peace and uprightness, and did turn many away from iniquity."

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